

Compromise offer on Land Rover

By Anthony Bevins, Political Correspondent

Mr Paul Channon, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, is expected to make a Commons statement next Tuesday, announcing a compromise deal for British Leyland privatization...

Popular approval for royal pairing

By Alan Hamilton

More than three-quarters of the public approve the pairing of Prince Andrew with Miss Sarah Ferguson, an opinion poll conducted yesterday by BBC Television's Breakfast Time programme suggests.



Miss Sarah Ferguson paused briefly on the doorstep of her office in London when she arrived back at work yesterday.

Trawler crew of five lost in Irish Sea

By Peter Davenport

The five-man crew of a trawler were all presumed to have drowned last night after their vessel capsized in force 10 gales in the Irish Sea.

Tomorrow

Hooray for Hollywood - how the stars get down to back-biting and infighting in the run-up to the Academy Awards. Festivals in Britain: What's on and where in 1986.

Portfolio

The Times Portfolio daily competition prize of £2,000 was won yesterday by Mr M.C. Norrington of Twickenham. Portfolio list, page 26; how to play, information service, page 16.

One dead in Paris blast

One person was killed and 21 injured - nine seriously - when an explosion ripped through the ground floor of an arcade in the Champs Elysees, Paris, last night.

Teachers' vote

Scottish teachers have voted 8-1 in favour of a 15 per cent, two-year pay deal, according to preliminary ballot results.

Labour purge

A concerted national purge of Militant Tendency supporters is being planned by leading Labour right-wingers but party headquarters will not be involved.

Date for D

The D prefix on vehicle registration plates will continue until October 1987, the Department of Transport announced. The August change time clashed with motor dealers' holidays.

The Queen opens Greater Manchester's new Exhibition Centre today. A Special Report reviews this and other important redevelopment projects under way in the North-west. Pages 23-25

Table with 2 columns: Home News, Overseas, Arts, Births/Deaths, Marriages, Business, Chess, Court, Crosswords, Diary, Features, Law Report. Includes sub-sections like Leaders, Letters, Motoring, Obituary, etc.

Chirac is appointed and names ministers

From Diane Geddes Paris. M Jacques Chirac was finally appointed Prime Minister of France late yesterday afternoon, two days after President Mitterrand had originally said he would make the appointment.

Lord Hailsham accused of 'illegal act' on defence fees

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent. The dispute between the Bar of England and Wales and the Government concerned yesterday with the start of High Court proceedings in which barristers accused Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone, the Lord Chancellor, of acting illegally in limiting their fees for legally-aided defence work to 5 per cent.

Minister clears Guinness bid

By Jeremy Warner, Business Correspondent. Guinness will be allowed to proceed with its £2.4 billion takeover bid for Distillers, the Johnnie Walker whisky and Gordon's gin drinks group, despite fears that it will damage competition in the British drinks market.

Reagan loses rebel aid vote

From Michael Binyon Washington. After ten hours of impassioned debate, the House of Representatives voted yesterday by 222 votes to 210 to reject President Reagan's \$100 million aid package to the Nicaraguan rebels.

Shares up, mortgages down

The boom in share prices, given added zest by Tuesday's Budget, continued yesterday, while more building societies cut mortgage rates (David Smith, Economics Correspondent, writes).

Scots drink law held up as model for England

Alcoholism and drink-driving convictions have fallen significantly in Scotland during the past decade since the introduction of more relaxed licensing laws, according to a report published yesterday.

Lloyd's may get EEC bonanza

From Richard Owen, Luxembourg. The European Court of Justice yesterday took a big step towards the liberalization of the European insurance market, from which Lloyd's and other British insurers stand to gain substantially.

Advertisement for Parker Knoll furniture featuring a sofa and text: 'DON'T STAND FOR LESS THAN A FIVE-SEATER SINGLE BED. Why settle for second best when you can own the Beverly sofa, a stylish 2-seater which converts to a 3-seater - or even a single bed - in a trice.'

Advertisement for Parker Knoll furniture featuring a sofa and text: 'Don't stand for less than Parker Knoll. For more information and our Book of Comfort, please send the coupon in this Black Dept. FTB, Parker Knoll Furniture Limited, PO Box 22, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 5DZ.'

Pay pharmacists less for dispensing, more for advice, reports says

By Nicholas Timmins, Social Services Correspondent

High street chemists should be paid less for dispensing medicines and more for providing advice and other services to patients and doctors, an inquiry into the future of pharmacy recommended yesterday.

Failure to act on serious symptoms

Pharmacists are getting better at giving advice to the public, but one in four failed to tell patients to see a doctor immediately when told of symptoms that could have been signs of serious illness, according to a survey by the Consumers' Association.

works encourages smaller pharmacies to open as they are paid more than larger ones for each prescription dispensed. It also encourages a search for new dispensing business, at the expense of time spent working with doctors to reduce prescribing levels and costs, while improving quality.

Bonanza time for the royal souvenirs

Bonanza time for the royal souvenirs

By Patricia Clough

The official mugs commemorating the engagement of Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson were streaming off the production line yesterday as Britain's multi-million pound royal souvenir industry geared up for another bonanza.

The mugs, in black, white and gold, were designed and put into production by Staffordshire Potteries within 12 hours of receiving the commission at 11 am on Wednesday in a frantic, high-speed operation.

The mugs, priced 99p, should be in the shops on Monday. But the prize for the shrewdest operator, however, must go to Debreff's who have been secretly working since the end of last year on a glossy coffee-table, *Book of the Royal Engagement*, in a calculated gamble which, if it had failed, could have cost them more than £10,000.

Mr Robert Jarman, Debreff's managing director, would not say exactly whether they had been acting on inside information. "All I can say is that all the people who seem to know about these things were sure this was the girl," he said.

Debreff's, who sold 207,000 copies of a similar book for the Prince of Wales's wedding with a turnover of £790,000, are frantically putting the finishing touches before rushing the material to Italy for quick printing.

With somewhat less haste, big pottery companies such as Coalport, Wedgwood and Royal Doulton, are preparing to turn out mugs, plates and other souvenirs for the wedding which, as Harrods noted with delight, looks like coming at the height of the tourist season.

Pickin, who sold one million



The royal engagement mugs, priced at 99p, rolling off the production line at Staffordshire Potteries within 24 hours of the official announcement, for sale from Monday.

copies each of the official royal wedding souvenir book and the royal wedding programme, are working on a number of publications including one which will come out as soon as the date and place of the wedding and the couple's future home is known.

There was a little uncertainty about the extent of the souvenir market for this wedding; a junior prince is not the same as the heir to the throne but Prince Andrew's public image and the attractiveness of his bride look like making it an extremely popular event, insiders say.

"I think we will be surprised by the level of interest; maybe the last wedding has whetted people's appetites," one managing director said. But Mr John May, a Kensington antique dealer, warned buyers against the idea that royal engagement or wedding

Rally of Guides was 'badly organized'

By Gavin Bell

A Girl Guides rally at Crystal Palace, London, at which 27 girls were taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia, was badly organized and some of its leaders displayed an apparent lack of common sense, an inquiry has concluded.

The report of the committee of inquiry, chaired by Mr Charles Sparrow, QC, and published yesterday, said that no provisions had been made for the adverse weather at the rally of 25,000 people last April, nobody was identified as being in overall control, and there was no central command structure or comprehensive communications system.

The report made several recommendations for improving the organization of future events, notably the designation of a controller with the power to curtail or halt the programme.

Dr June Paterson-Brown, the Girl Guides chief commissioner, told a press conference that the association had already implemented a further key recommendation, that weatherproof capoules be made part of the official uniform.

Most of the girls taken to hospital after temperatures dropped to zero and snow began falling had been wearing regulation cotton blouses and skirts.

Dr Paterson-Brown said a committee had been appointed to draft a brochure laying down precise procedures for the planning of big events that would include provisions for emergencies.

Mrs Anne Dunford, the deputy chief commissioner, said the association accepted responsibility collectively and no individuals had been reprimanded.

Watchdog defensive on delays

By Stephen Goodwin, Political Staff

The Ombudsman, whose job it is to root out incompetence in government departments, was on the defensive yesterday about delays in the investigation of complaints referred by MPs.

Mr Anthony Barrowclough, QC, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration, took the opportunity of his annual report to respond to criticism voiced last July by a select committee.

In his report, Mr Barrowclough admits that an average through-put time of almost 12 months for cases in the year to September 1985 is "clearly unsatisfactory" and says the time factor needs to be brought down to about nine months.

"Given the nature of the work, the complexity of many of the cases and the need for due thoroughness, anything much faster than this would be an unrealistic target - unless staffing were to be increased to a level which would be patently wasteful of the public purse," he says.

The backlog of new complaints awaiting screening or further information from the MPs concerned was substantially down at 54 on September 30, 1985, compared with 111 the previous year.

Altogether, 788 complaints were disposed by the Ombudsman during the report year; 177 full investigations were completed, in 75 of those the complaint was found to be fully justified, in 80 it was partly justified and in 22 cases no justification was found.

Blandford is sent for trial

Lord Blandford, aged 30, was committed for trial to Knightsbridge Crown Court on drugs charges yesterday.

He appeared at West London Court accused with others of conspiring to supply cocaine in contravention of the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971. He was granted bail with two sureties of £5,000 and on condition that he lives at a drug clinic in Surrey.

BA is popular with both sexes

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

Wide differences in the preferences of male and female business travellers are highlighted in a MORI poll carried out for Thomas Cook, the travel agents.

Businessmen, for example, are keen about Holiday Inn hotels, perhaps the swimming pools make the difference, while businessmen favour Trusthouse Forte.

But both prefer British Airways as the airline for trips to Europe, although businessmen complained that, in general, air hostesses were inclined to give better service to male travelling companions. BA was first choice for 37

Acquitted man is rearrested

A man was rearrested yesterday just after a Central Criminal Court jury had acquitted him of a double murder with a ceremonial sword in an east London restaurant.

Police said that Mr Ronald Reader, aged 44, was being taken to Portsmouth in Hampshire "to be dealt with by police there".

Mr Reader, a builder of Cornwallis Road, Dagenham, was accused of the murders of David Elmore, aged 36, and James Waddington, aged 38, at the Kaleli Restaurant in Station Road, Barking, on the night of St Valentine's Day, 1984. He was also cleared of assaulting the two men.

A year ago, Mr David Maxwell, aged 43, was also cleared of the killings by a Central Criminal Court jury.

Mr Reader denied being in the restaurant at the time of the killings, and maintained he had been framed by the restaurant barman, Mr Brian Wilson, who was the chief prosecution witness.

A big police search failed to find the two missing men, although a ceremonial sword was recovered from the East India Dock.

Doctor named by MP declares innocence

By Stewart Tendler

The Essex doctor named by an MP last week as the rapist of a girl, aged eight, yesterday claimed that he was innocent and that he had been pilloried.

The doctor was named in a Commons written question by Mr Geoffrey Dickens, Conservative MP for Littleborough and Saddleworth, who said the doctor had been questioned by the police, but that the Director of Public Prosecutions decided there was insufficient evidence to prosecute.

Yesterday, in a statement issued by a Southend firm of solicitors, the doctor, who is facing a private prosecution financed by *The Sun* newspaper, said: "I am completely

Bail for three policemen

Three London police officers were remanded on unconditional bail by Bow Street magistrates yesterday, accused of assault and conspiring to pervert the course of justice.

Police constables Michael Wearing, aged 27, of Vintage House, Fleet Street, and Victor Weekes, aged 24, and Albert Swanston, aged 26, both of Kennington Lane, Kennington, are charged with assaulting Mr Paul Lally, causing actual bodily harm, outside the Barley Mow public house in Horseferry Road, Westminster.

They are also accused of conspiring to pervert the course of justice by falsely accusing Mr Lally of using threatening behaviour and falsely accusing his brother, Mr Raymond Lally, of obstructing the police.

Mr Anthony Morse, a company director, of Horseferry Road, was also charged with assaulting Mr Lally. All were remanded until April 17.

Bow Street magistrates yesterday remanded Police Constable Wayne Marshall, aged 25, of West Hampstead police station, on unconditional bail until April 17 accused of robbery and assault on Mr Thomas McDonagh, aged 44, in Holland Park, west London, in November last year.

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Yesterday, in a statement issued by a Southend firm of solicitors, the doctor, who is facing a private prosecution financed by *The Sun* newspaper, said: "I am completely

innocent of the allegation that I committed an act of rape. No charges have been brought against me."

The doctor pointed out that no newspaper can publish the name of a person accused or suspected of rape until the person has been convicted, without incurring penalties.

The doctor's statement went on: "Mr Geoffrey Dickens has flouted this principle from his safe position in the House of Commons."

Mr Dickens, criticized by many MPs for his use of parliamentary privilege, also found his attempt to name a Humber vicar accused of abusing children blocked by the Speaker

What to make of Nigel

When he was editor of *The Spectator*, he was the sharpest critic of the powerful.

Now that he is Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson faces the critics himself.

And who better for the task than the *Spectator* team: Ferdinand Mount, former head of Mrs Thatcher's policy unit, Jock Bruce-Gardyne, ex-Economic Secretary to the Treasury, and Christopher Fildes, our City columnist?

Will tax cuts produce jobs? Will "popular capitalism" be popular enough to win the election?

What are the Chancellor's true intentions? Read Mr Lawson's mind by reading *The Spectator* this Friday.

Where, of course, you'll find a lot more than Budget talk.

Auberon Waugh, for example, in an unprecedented display of good nature, praises Richard Ingrams, departing editor of *Private Eye*: "Of all my contemporaries, he is undoubtedly the one who has made the greatest mark on his times."

John Mortimer continues his Diary.

Anita Brookner reviews John Le Carré's *A Perfect Spy* and finds it more than perfect.

Sam White reports from post-election France.

And we come up with the best candidate for the new head of the British Council: the Prince of Wales.

Put *The Spectator* in your budget this week.

THE SPECTATOR

PARLIAMENT MARCH 20 1986

The Budget

Petrol prices

Licensing hours

PM wants cheaper petrol: companies harming themselves

Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister declared during question time in the Commons that Mr Neil Kinnock, Leader of the Opposition, was premature in demanding a windfall tax to take from oil companies...



Churchill: Refer to Monopolies Commission

Dr David Owen, Leader of the SDP, in view of the urgent need to increase the industrial competitiveness of this country...

Too much scribbling in reply to MPs

IMMIGRATION

Mr David Waddington, Minister of State, Home Office, complained in the Commons that far too many immigration officers were having to sit in offices scribbling replies to MPs on immigration cases...

Extensive and ambitious plans for job creation: economic outlook good

EMPLOYMENT

The present generation of working people faced the best economic outlook of their lifetime, with high growth, low inflation, falling oil prices and exchange rates which were stable at levels that enabled the country to be competitive...

Anti-flu vaccine may be useless

HOUSE OF LORDS

Lady Tringham, Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Services, started peers at question time in the House of Lords by saying that she had been informed that the anti-flu vaccine was quite useless...

Calls for relaxation of drinks laws

LICENSING

There were strong arguments for relaxing licensing laws in England and Wales, since liberalization of opening hours in Scotland had disposed of some of the fears over what would happen...

Mr Douglas Hogg (Conservative, C) said drinking laws in England and Wales were a restraint on trade and regarded with distaste by most people...

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MPs right to voice concern

JUSTICE

It was reasonable that public concern over occasional leniency in sentencing by the courts should find expression in the House...

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Next week's business

The main business in the House of Commons next week will be: Monday: Conclusion of Budget debate. Tuesday: Gas Bill, third reading. Motion for the Easter adjournment. Wednesday: Debate on immigration rules.

Britain's workers 'bunch of thickies'

Britain's workforce is "a bunch of thickies" in terms of skills and qualifications, compared with competitor countries, according to Mr Bryan Nicholson, chairman of the Manpower Services Commission...

Crisis may push debt to £1.1 bn

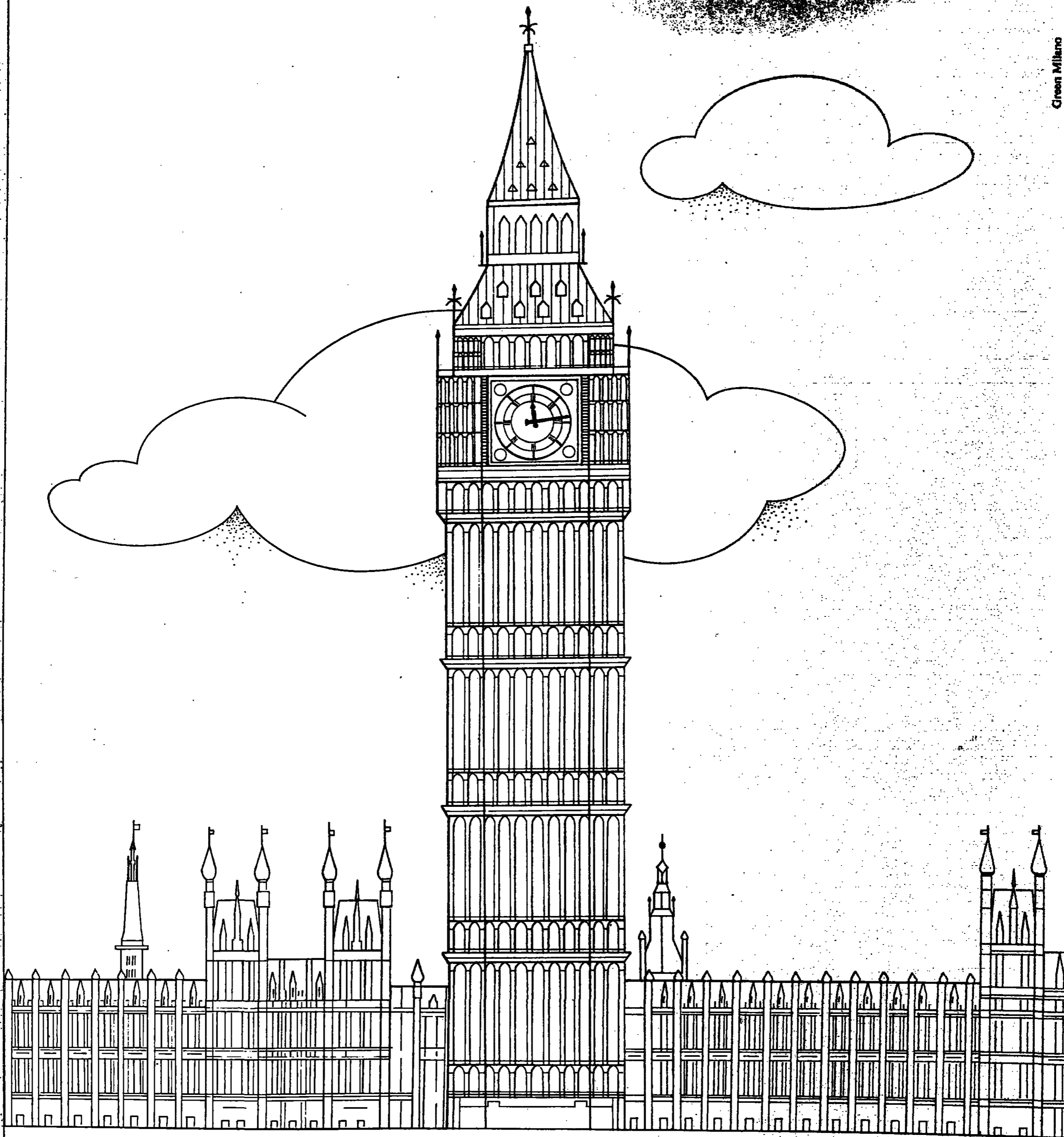
The world debt crisis, aggravated by the fall in the price of oil, is expected to push the debts of the Export Credits Guarantee Department to more than £1,100 million within 12 months...

Science report

Why lean meat turns tough Consumers who are conscious of their weight or health and who insist on buying lean meat, should not be surprised if it turns out to be dry and tough after cooking...



Champion Steve Davis, with his wax partner at Madame Tussand's yesterday (Photograph: Peter Trievnor)



Green Milano



GUCCI

GUCCI: HISTORY MARCHES ON. FROM TOMORROW A NEW BOUTIQUE AT SELFRIDGES LTD., OXFORD STREET, LONDON W1A 1AB.



Selfridges

Polish priests make bitter attack on vetting of teachers

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

The Polish authorities and the Roman Catholic Church are locked in a new row over the role of religion in schools, with many priests bitterly criticizing the vetting of teachers for their beliefs and what they describe as "atheistic propaganda".

Mr Jerzy Urban, the Government's spokesman, yesterday gave a warning against "the clericalization of schooling and the school system", and attacked the priests of a number of parishes for trying to create a battle-ground between Church and state.

The vetting was no more or less than a series of talks with teachers before the usual round of promotions, he said. Poland's bishops last week launched a broadside against the authorities on several issues: the number of political prisoners, atheist bias in the school curriculum, and restrictions on church building.

The Church has, however, stepped in to defuse a potentially serious problem for the authorities by calling on Solidarity hunger strikers to end their fast, so far with little effect.

Representatives of a church committee to aid political prisoners visited Warsaw's top-security Rakowiecka prison and passed on an appeal to the fasters from Cardinal Jozef Glemp.

According to the authorities, there are only four hunger strikers among Poland's 159 non-criminal - that is, politi-

cal - prisoners. But three of them have been fasting since October, and both Solidarity and the Church are afraid that the most prominent activist, Mr Czeslaw Bielecki, is seriously ill.

The authorities play down the prospect of death among the fasters and have been feeding them artificially. "There has been no case of a death by hunger strike in a Polish prison," Colonel Stanislaw Wrona, a Justice Ministry official, said, "in contrast to Ireland when no action was taken to keep hunger strikers alive."

But he and other members of the prison administration, giving a remarkably detailed account of life behind bars, made it clear that the Government was keen to end the fasting as soon as possible. Quite apart from humanitarian considerations, the last thing that the authorities want is a Solidarity martyr.

The Church fears, too, that a hunger strike tragedy would disrupt the careful step-by-step progress towards a papal visit to Poland next year. It is still on the offensive - Polish bishops not only criticized the number of political prisoners recently, they also attacked the religious vetting of teachers, atheist propaganda in schools and restrictions on church building - but Church advisers want to create a situation whereby the Government feels relaxed enough to make large concessions to Catholics.

The Rakowiecka doctor, Dr

Jerzy Possart, said that Mr Bielecki, aged 38, was in the prison hospital and had lost nearly 50lb. Solidarity sources say he has lost more than 65lb and that he has heart problems.

Mr Bielecki was arrested in April and has been charged with preparing to overthrow the state. However, the charges have not yet been presented formally to the court and he is regarded, like more than 100 other political prisoners, as being under "temporary arrest".

In presenting the government case - and in the interests of making favourable comparisons with Western prison systems - officials have been giving rare insights into the everyday life of inmates.

There were 112,000 prisoners in Poland, Colonel Wrona said, but only a dozen or so escaped annually. The number of executions every year was very low, rarely exceeding three and usually less. Political prisoners did not have to work and were given an appropriate diet - a calorie intake of 2,600. They were allowed to receive six food parcels a year, and in some cases allowed to read books.

Church sources argue that even when a prisoner has full privileges his life is far from idyllic: letters, for example, can be received only from a restricted list of acceptable correspondents, and church aid packages have to be explicitly requested and authorized.

Inquest into Ariane launch failure

Kourou, French Guyana (Reuters) - An urgent inquiry began yesterday into the dramatic aborted launch of an Ariane rocket carrying two satellites, and ArianeSpace officials said they hoped to schedule a relaunch in eight to 10 days.

The last-minute termination of the launch on Wednesday, which was triggered by a failure of flight computers to register a crucial piece of data seconds before lift-off, came as a psychological blow to ArianeSpace.

The flight was to be the first from a new launchpad, completed last summer with the aim of doubling Ariane's launch capacity to around 10 flights a year.

The ArianeSpace president, M Frédéric d'Allest, said that it was too early to blame the problem on the launchpad. But the fault was "clearly a ground-equipment problem".

The third-stage liquid oxygen and hydrogen tanks will have to be checked for damage they may have sustained in the seconds after the aborted lift-off, when technicians had to depressurize them rapidly.

Space officials were pleased and relieved with the perfect functioning of the automatic computer safety mechanism which triggered the launch abort.

But they were also aware that the final seconds of countdown could have led to a potentially catastrophic explosion had the first-stage main engines ignited while the rocket was still attached to its umbilical tower.



Four years old. Seriously underweight for her age. Scavenging for food where she can find it. And she's English.

With a stepfather who refused to acknowledge her existence and a mother too frightened to help her, this child was being slowly and deliberately starved.

She'd reached the point where she was feeding herself out of dustbins.

It didn't happen in the famine stricken third world, it happened in an English town, (like the one you live in).

The NSPCC doesn't set out to punish the parents or break up the home.

The child has to be protected. We provide help for both her and her parents.

£15.48 can protect a child for two weeks. And that's the sum we're asking for now.

If you can't afford quite that much, all donations are gratefully received.

I want to help protect a child and enclose my cheque or postal order: £ 15.48 £30.96 £46.44 £61.92

Access and Visa card holders may debit their accounts.

No. BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

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Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Please send your donation to: Dr A. Gibbon, Ref: 41576 NSPCC, FREEPOST, London EC3B 1CQ

This is a typical case. To protect the child's identity the face has been changed.



General Fabian Ver, former Philippines chief of staff, leaving the courtroom in Alexandria, Virginia, after appearing before a grand jury investigating alleged fraud and kick-backs in Pentagon-financed contracts during the rule of the deposed President Marcos.

Panama likely to accept Marcos

Panama City (Reuters) - Panamanian government sources said yesterday that a request for asylum by the deposed Philippines President, Mr Ferdinand Marcos, and his wife, Imelda, had been accepted.

One source said that the Government would probably announce acceptance of the request for "humanitarian reasons". The source refused to give any details and would not say when Mr Marcos might arrive from Hawaii or where he would stay in Panama. He fled to Hawaii from Manila last month on a US military plane.

Radio Mundial reported earlier that the US was informed officially yesterday of Panama's decision to accept Mr Marcos, but cited no sources. US Embassy officials here declined to comment.

Panama's refusal to comment on the radio report added to speculation that Mr Marcos's request had already been accepted.

Reagan Administration officials have said that Mr Marcos is unhappy about the publicity he has received in the American media over his methods of gaining great wealth for himself and his supporters.

In Washington, the State

Filipino rebels kill mayor

From Keith Dalton Manila

Communist rebels have ambushed a Jeep in the northern Philippines, killing a mayor and his three security guards in the first political killing by left-wing insurgents since President Aquino took power last month.

In the southern port city of Zamboanga, 300 rebels of the New People's Army attacked a military camp, killing eight people in a four-hour battle, the state news agency reported.

"We cannot allow innocent civilians and soldiers to be butchered," the Defence Minister, Mr Juan Ponce Enrile, said after the killing of his childhood friend, Mr Francisco Bacig, mayor of his home town of Gunzaga, in Cagayan province.

After killing Mr Bacig and his escorts, the rebels set fire to the Jeep before fleeing with rifles and a pistol taken from the dead men.

The news agency gave few details of the Zamboanga attack, but said that the rebels looted the camp, taking rifles and ammunition. It said more than 120 people had died in rebel attacks in the past three weeks.

The resurgence in attacks came as the armed forces chief, General Fidel Ramos, told military commanders that no formal ceasefire was in force, despite efforts by Mrs Aquino to seek a truce in the 17-year insurgency.

General Ramos told provincial commanders to "maintain present troop strength and deployment of forces", emphasizing that Mrs Aquino's peace efforts were "no reason to relax our security posture".

An unofficial ceasefire established earlier this month in central Luzon, north of Manila, has been called off and military operations resumed.

Sindona in coma after life term

Milan (Reuters) - Michele Sindona, the jailed Sicilian financier, is in intensive care in a coma and unlikely to recover, according to doctors. He was taken to hospital yesterday from his prison cell.

Sindona, aged 65, was jailed for life on Tuesday for having ordered the murder in 1979 of Signor Giorgio Ambrosoli, a lawyer appointed to wind up his failed Banca Privata Italiana.

He was not in court when the sentence was handed down, but later gave a television interview in which his health appeared to be normal.

During the last hearing of his trial, he was taken ill in court but quickly recovered.

Sindona had previously been sentenced to 25 years' jail in the United States for fraud after his Franklin National Bank collapsed. A Milan court sentenced him to 15 years on similar charges after the 1974 failure of his Italian banking empire.

At his latest trial, the prosecution said that Sindona had wanted to rid himself of Ambrosoli because the lawyer opposed his efforts to gather political support for a revival of his Italian businesses.

Thousands in Dhaka poll march

From Ahmed Fazi Dhaka

At least 30,000 people marched through Dhaka under a blazing sun yesterday in protest against the parliamentary election called for April 26 by the military ruler, President Ershad.

The demonstration, organized by the opposition 15-party and seven-party alliances and the fundamentalist Jamaat-Islami, demanded the ending of martial law and General Ershad's resignation.

Organizers said that the demonstration marked the beginning of three days of protest, which would end with a countrywide general strike on Saturday - the day originally set for filing nominations for the polls.

Marchers with party flags and banners chanted "Down with military rule" as thousands of police in full riot gear guarded the President's palace and roads.

The country's two largest opposition parties yesterday had a writ challenging an amendment of an election law by General Ershad disallowed by the Supreme Court.

The shooting in Cairo

Mubarak soothes Israeli anger

From Alice Brinton, Cairo

President Hosni Mubarak has expressed his country's sorrow over Wednesday night's attack on Israeli diplomats here and has said that Egypt is committed to peace and will work to improve relations between the two countries.

Israel's Minister of Tourism, Mr Abraham Sharir, and the Israeli Ambassador, to Cairo, Mr Moshe Sasson, met President Mubarak yesterday, reportedly at Mr Mubarak's request, in the wake of the attack which left one Israeli woman dead and three other Israeli diplomats wounded.

After the meeting, Mr Sharir appeared gratified by the Egyptian response and said that the incident would not damage relations. "The President repeated many times in our conversation that he is committed to the cause of peace and to cementing the peace between our two countries," he said, and added: "He will do everything in his power to move step by step so that our two countries can enjoy peace and prosperity in our area."

A group calling itself "Egypt's Revolution", which admitted responsibility for two previous attacks on Israeli diplomats here, has also claimed that it was behind the ambush of the four Israelis.

It happened at 7pm as the four were on their way home from the Cairo International Trade Fair.

Cairo radio yesterday quoted an unidentified witness as saying that two cars were involved in the shooting: one blocked the Israeli's light blue Peugeot as another pulled alongside. Gunmen in the cars then opened fire with automatic weapons.

The three wounded Israelis were flown out early yesterday morning on an Israeli Air Force jet, but the body of Mrs Etti Tal-Or was kept in Cairo as investigations by Egyptian authorities got under way.

The attack happened while two Israeli delegations are in Cairo on fence-mending missions. Relations between Egypt and Israel have long been strained over several political issues and aggravated further by a series of attacks on Israelis in Egypt.

Last October an Egyptian border policeman opened fire and killed seven Israeli tourists in Sinai. The Israelis have been unhappy at the Egyptians' explanation and handling of the affair.

Last August an Israeli diplomat, Mr Albert Atrakchi, was gunned down in a residential suburb of Cairo and two women with him were injured. In June 1984, a similar incident left another Israeli diplomat injured.

Both attacks on the diplomats have been admitted by Egypt's Revolution, but no one seems to know just who its members are.

While some Western diplomats and Egyptians have said they are at a loss as to the identity of the group, they have also suggested that it may be backed by hardline Arab elements opposed to Egypt's peace with Israel and the Camp David accord.

Poodle and Porsche set shuns Americans

From John Best, Ottawa

The United States Embassy here is starting to look like an orphan nobody wants to take in.

The Americans have been looking for a new home for years; ever since the Canadian Government told them they had to vacate the present embassy building in Wellington Street across from Parliament Hill. The National Capital Commission wants to take over the gracious old building as part of its long-term plan to develop hill precincts.

The Americans have shown interest in a number of locales, including a square in downtown Ottawa and a lovely green island in a small river in the north-eastern part of the city. But in both cases, local authorities have succeeded in blocking any deals.

Another location, on Sussex Drive not far from Parliament Hill, was actually accepted by the Americans but then rejected for security reasons - it was not sufficiently set back from the street.

Now the Americans have their eye on Mile Circle, a choice piece of parkland near the edge of the Ottawa River and owned by the NCC. But the trouble with this location is that it abuts the Rockcliffe Park Village, an exclusive residential neighbourhood whose residents find the whole idea exceedingly distasteful.

What one newspaper dubbed the "poodle and Porsche set", and an adjacent neighbourhood of Manor Park, has mounted a strenuous campaign aimed at dissuading the NCC from going through with its tentative plan to turn over about 10 acres of Mile Circle's 52 acres to the Americans.

Apart from losing a place to stroll and walk their dogs, residents fear their peaceful lives will be disrupted by anti-US demonstrations which, they contend, the embassy would bring into their midst.

Unblocks Brains

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

One track minds. Try diverting them with the Illustrated London News. This month for instance, a probing examination of Britain. Are we in danger of becoming a 4th rate nation? And a celebration supplement on 100 years of motoring beginning with Mercedes. Interesting features for a wide range of interests.

John is 10

YUGOSLAVIA Part 1

On Sunday Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, arrives in Yugoslavia for a two-day visit. In the first of two articles Richard Dowden reports from Belgrade on the country's politics six years after the death of President Tito.

The search for leadership

Belgrade's 'cart' is deep in the mire with nowhere to go

There is an old Serbian peasant saying that if your cart gets stuck in the mud you find a new team of horses to pull it out. Everyone in Yugoslavia today, including the Communist Government, admits that the country is stuck deep in the mud; but what gets many people is that the group trying to get it out is the same one that got it there in the first place.

At the same time they admit that there is no alternative to the League of Communists, as the party is called here. The league still claims particular legitimacy from its guerrilla struggle against Fascist occupation during the Second World War. "It was the only party which remained with the people during the War," one senior party official explained.

While there are now very few surviving at senior government level, the country's only other political forces are essentially nationalist factions.

"Nationalism is not just folklore in our country. There would be serious consequences from nationalist tensions. Fascists already play on the nationalist issues," said the party official, pointing out that 97 Yugoslav diplomats and civilians have been assassinated by anti-Communists in recent years.

Even though the party can claim, with justification, that without it there would be no Yugoslavia, many would point out that the party is tainted, if not crippled, by the very disease from which it claims to protect the country.

Power in Yugoslavia lies with party officials at republican and provincial level. The six republics and two provinces which make up the federation are so disparate in wealth, culture, religion and attitude



Mr Mikulic threatened to resign in January. That their local parties simply reflect those differences.

One observer said: "Whenever a deputy speaks in Parliament I do not need to know his name or where he is from. I know immediately from the tone of his speech which area's interests he is protecting."

The most able people find they wield more power at provincial level, and stay there. In his acceptance speech in January, Mr Branko Mikulic, the incoming Prime Minister, threatened to resign if the best candidates for the Federal Government did not come forward.

The 1974 Constitution tried to cope with the national problem by building the system around consensus and by rotating senior posts round the constituent republics. "It is a bit like the EEC, but with twice the bureaucracy and none of the unanimity," said one observer.

As long as Tito was alive everyone knew where power lay, but no one is emerging with the personal authority to unite the nation. Many would

say that Yugoslavia's present problems arise from the 1974 Constitution, and call for radical changes.

The most serious manifestation is the disillusionment of the Serbs. Yugoslavia cannot survive without the assent of the Serbs, the largest single population group.

In view of the lack of individual leadership, however, there seems no alternative to the present system. But reaching consensus takes time and does not always achieve the best solution, particularly when tough economic decisions are needed. Decisions which are made are sometimes interpreted differently in different regions and the central Government lacks the authority to overrule them.

The lack of authority makes the system very open and the issues are discussed freely inside and outside the party. Ironically it is often the loyal party men who defend the system, while the "dissidents" call for stronger government.

Belgrade listens to what is said in Moscow but has never felt dominated by the Soviet Union since Tito broke away from Stalin in 1948. Non-aligned Yugoslavia votes against the Soviet Union over Afghanistan and against Vietnam over Cambodia at the United Nations, and the Russians complain about this at every opportunity.

Yugoslavia is the world's most free Communist state, but it retains an armoury of repressive measures against those who attack the system.

"Newspapers here cannot take an anti-Communist line, nor can there be any questioning of the basic facts, but there can be criticism of concrete phenomena; for example, over wrongly-placed investment," said the party official.

The level of tolerance varies from area to area. Bosnia and Croatia are the most repressive. Slovenia and Serbia are the most liberal. At present there are about 2,000 political prisoners, most of them held in connection with the troubles in Kosovo, where 1.5 million Albanians are steadily overwhelming the Serbs, who are leaving the area at the rate of 2,000 a month.

The Serbs believe that the Muslim Albanians are forcing their fellow Serbs out of the birthplace of the medieval Serbian renaissance. It is holy land to them, and feelings are beginning to run very high.

Tomorrow: Economic crisis.

Britain urges Cyprus dialogue

From Mario Modiano Athens

Britain is urging Greece and Turkey to open an "across-the-board" diplomatic dialogue in an effort to resolve the Cyprus crisis and to restore Nato unity in the region.

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, arrived here last night and is expected to put Britain's argument to Mr Andreas Papandreu, the Greek Prime Minister, at a meeting in his country house at Kastri this morning.

The British view was explained to a fairly receptive Mr Turgut Ozal, the Turkish Prime Minister, when he visited London in mid-February. Britain regards new proposals for Cyprus to be submitted shortly by Señor Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the UN Secretary-General, as a last chance. Its view is shared by the US.

In Western capitals, however, there is a strong suspicion that Mr Papandreu fuelled the negative attitude of the Greek Cypriot leaders during earlier efforts for a settlement. This view was reinforced when Mr Papandreu expressed scepticism about Señor Pérez de Cuéllar's initiative, which, he said, would be a waste of time unless it met two conditions: first, that Turkish troops withdraw from Cyprus before the implementation of a federal solution; and secondly, that Turkey should have no unilateral intervention rights in the settlement.

The British position now is that these contentious proposals should be resolved by direct Greek-Turkish negotiation.

Britain believes that dialogue would also help to eliminate bilateral points of friction which have disrupted Nato defence planning in the region. "We want to see a strong and effective defence in Nato's south-eastern flank," a senior British diplomat said. "Until there is a more stable relationship between Greece and Turkey, this will not be possible."

A crucial problem is whether under existing treaties the Greek island of Lemnos, at the mouth of the Dardanelles, can be militarized. The Greeks maintain it can, and the Turks insist it cannot.

Greece is boycotting all Nato manoeuvres in the Aegean until Nato accepts its view by incorporating the island in the exercises. The alliance has urged the two sides to sort out the problem bilaterally.

Sir Geoffrey's visit here is the first bilateral official visit by a British Foreign Secretary since Sir Anthony Eden's in 1941.

He will find the one-time nonconformist Mr Papandreu much mellowed by his concern over Greece's economic and defence problems.

Turkish troops are present in northern Cyprus, not Greek troops, as stated yesterday.



Japan wins 'right' to vet textbooks

From David Watts Tokyo

The Tokyo High Court has confirmed that the Japanese Government has the right to decide the content of school textbooks. The decision will strengthen the revisionist mood in teaching Second World War history.

The ruling was on a 12-year-old appeal that revision of school textbooks by the Education Ministry was unconstitutional and an abuse of discretionary powers.

In 1974 the Tokyo district court upheld the ministry's right to intervene in the compilation of textbooks, but found it had gone too far by making Professor Saburo Ienaga rewrite parts of a book before resubmitting it. It ordered the state to pay him

100,000 yen (now about £388) in damages.

This week's ruling overturned those findings and turned down the claim for damages. It was welcomed immediately by Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone, the Prime Minister, who said he had never believed the ministry had acted unconstitutionally.

The ruling backs Mr Nakasone's campaign for Japan to rid itself of some of the influences of its American-imposed Constitution and become more nationalistic.

The case originally arose over the rejection of a history text submitted by Professor Ienaga, now retired from the Tokyo University of Education, for the academic year 1962. The book was accepted the following year after he had

revised some of his references to the War.

Since then he has been fighting a campaign on history teaching in Japanese schools. His campaign blew up into a diplomatic confrontation with South Korea and China in 1982, when it was reported that the ministry had ordered textbook writers to describe Japan's invasion of China as an "advance".

Most Japanese schools teach an anodyne version of the War which says little about events before Pearl Harbour. Professor Ienaga has always insisted that the Japanese should look at the War in the longer perspective and regard its real beginning as 1931, when the Japanese Army moved into China.

Judge Kiyoshi Suzuki yesterday said that the Govern-

ment was empowered by the Constitution to implement an appropriate education policy and to intervene in what is taught in classrooms to an extent it deems necessary and reasonable. Screening textbooks was neither a violation of freedom of speech nor of education law.

Professor Ienaga, a frail figure who has two other cases in the courts, said after the hearing that his involvement in history teaching had taught him to take the long-term perspective.

"Though I regret the ruling, I don't feel it has nullified everything that I have been working for so far. What concerns me is that the court is virtually abandoning its role as the prime judicial force and the watchdog of the rule of law."

PUBLIC NOTICE Major DISPOSAL AUCTION of several hundred exceptionally fine and medium quality, handmade PERSIAN CARPETS rugs and runners... and others from the more important weaving centres of the East. Included are many antiques, silks, felts, nomads and other unusual items, not generally to be found on the home market. This merchandise is the property of a number of principal direct importers in the U.K., which has been cleared from H.M. Customs & Excise bond, to be disposed of at nominal or no reserve for immediate cash realisation. Every item guaranteed authentic. Expert advice available at time of viewing. To be transferred from bonded warehouses and offered at the: HILTON INTERNATIONAL HOTEL, KENSINGTON, HOLLAND PARK AVENUE, LONDON W11, ON SUNDAY, 23rd MARCH AT 3PM Viewing from noon same day. Payment: cash, cheque or all major credit cards. Auctioneers: A Wastley Breeze & Partners Ltd., 144/142 New Bond Street, London W1. Tel: 01-463 4572.

Teachers are sacked after boy's suicide

Tokyo - Three Tokyo junior high school teachers have been discharged by the Board of Education after one of their students committed suicide. In the first case of its kind three other teachers were disciplined (David Watts writes).

The teacher in charge of Hirofumi Shikagawa's second-year class actually drafted the eulogy for a mock funeral which bullies at the school staged for the boy, who hanged himself in November.

Two of the three other teachers who signed the eulogy had their pay cut and the third was reprimanded. They are also to have a year's special training.

A nationwide Ministry of Education survey of the bullying problem between April and October last year found that 155,066 cases of bullying had been reported at 39,415 schools.

ANOTHER PLUG FOR TOSHIBA. TOSHIBA INFORMATION SYSTEMS (UK) LTD Office Automation Equipment 1986. TOSHIBA INTERNATIONAL FINANCE (UK) LTD Intergroup Finance 1985. TOSHIBA MEDICAL SYSTEMS LTD Medical Equipment 1981. TOSHIBA CONSUMER PRODUCTS (UK) LTD Manufacturer of TV, Video and Microwave Oven Equipment 1981. TOSHIBA INTERNATIONAL COMPANY LTD Heavy Industrial Equipment and Procurement 1979. TOSHIBA (UK) LTD Consumer Goods 1973. On the 1st January, we opened our sixth company in the UK. It's called Toshiba Information Systems. We've set it up to market, distribute and service our extensive range of computers and telephone systems. Which means we manufacture and supply electric and electronic equipment for the home, for the office, for hospitals and for industry. And some of these products we export from Britain. So as you can see, we're fully equipped to keep the UK switched on. In Touch with Tomorrow TOSHIBA. Such as photocopiers, micro equipment. Toshiba Information Systems (U.K.) Ltd., International House, Windmill Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex TW16 7HR. Tel 0932 785666.

SPECTRUM

The rising tide of moderation

The Social Democratic Party is five years old next week; has it broken the mould of British politics? Alan Franks reports from a town where it has achieved its aim of a radical change in voting patterns

As new towns go, Stevenage is the oldest. It lodges in a once rural rump of Hertfordshire, 35 miles to the north of the capital whose overspill it was designed to absorb. Thirty years after its construction it seems as dated as only newish things can be - a sprawl of housing estates and industrial sites radiating outwards from a core which was once a small country town of 7,000 residents. Today the population is more than seven times that number. Stevenage is now high up the SDP's shopping list of parliamentary constituencies, together with such targets as Swindon, Cardiff North, Blyth Valley and Exeter, and in its shifting demography can be charted the wider story of the new party's national aspirations. For this is an area which, no less than British politics, finds itself in a state of transition. The industries that came in the 1950s have thinned out - many of them are subsidiaries of large manufacturing companies - and unemployment now stands at 12.6 per cent, one third higher than the average for south-east England and nearly twice the overall rate for Hertfordshire. But as the traditional employers have receded - Kodak, Bowater, Memmore Industrial - so the newer ones arrive: hi-tech businesses, distribution centres, computer firms. All the while British Aerospace acts as the bedrock of the local wage economy: 7,200 jobs turning out the Rapier and SeaWolf at the guided weapons division, 3,000 at the dynamics division, and a further 8,000 over at the aircraft factory in Hatfield. Like Barrow in Cumbria, with its similar reliance on the Trident programme at Vickers, Stevenage finds itself at the core of the two great national preoccupations of defence and employment. At the last general election it was Labour's unilateralism, as much as the presence of an SDP candidate, which helped to slash the Labour vote to 12,673 and bring the new party's candidate to within less than 2,000 of the Conservative MP, Tim Wood (20,787). This makes Stevenage into the SDP's fourth most marginal seat with a Tory majority, and prompts the party's prospective parliamentary candidate Ben Stoneham to say of the next election: "If I don't win then, we may as well give up."

There have been other major forces in play to bring about a change in the character of the town. By 1985 the number of houses in private ownership had risen to 13,151 (47 per cent of total stock) from its 1981 figure of 9,660 (33 per cent). In other words, a new town commissioned under Atlee has been partly gentrified under Thatcher, with all the usual features like bow windows and brass door knockers to betoken an upward shift. Meanwhile the daily migration southwards by computers has been climbing steadily, so that today the main line station has become to Kings Cross as Watford is to Euston. Neither the town nor the outlying villages which make up the rest of the parliamentary constituency harbour serious gripes about traffic or roads. Thanks to the comparatively new infrastructure of the region, there is neither too much of the first nor too few of the second. As with many housing estates built subsequently across the northern belt of London's countryside, the main complaint is that the planners lacked precision when they left out the garages. Because of its anxieties about the impact of falling rolls on secondary education, the condition of the first wave of ageing council homes and the day care provision for an increasingly elderly population, Stevenage, with its air of classlessness, comes as near to being a classic example of the SDP target seat as any in the country. It is above all a natural for the community politician. If the party has transformed the politics of the constituency into a genuinely three-way proposition (given Labour's national resurgence), it must also own up to certain hereditary privileges, notably the so-called Shirley Factor. For Mrs Williams, now president of the party, was the Labour member for the old seat of Hertford and Stevenage from 1974 until defeated five years later by the Conservative Petrie Bowen Wells, with the narrowest of margins. Many members of the Stevenage SDP are defectors from Labour who, like Mrs Williams, became disaffected with the rise of the hard left during the late 1970s and 1980s. There is thus a sense of having made the journey in good company. Perhaps the most prized of these new centrists is Mr Philip Ireton, a redoubtable 82-year-old who can trace his family back 250 years in Stevenage, and who resigned from the Labour Party in 1979, one year after being presented with a certificate to honour his 60 years of membership. Having been Labour's first chairman of the county council as well as the only person to belong to the Stevenage Development Corporation for the full 33 years of its life from its inception in 1946, he represents for the local SDP a ready-made elder statesman. "Eight years ago", he recalls, "I was warning Labour that there were grim prospects ahead, but they didn't seem to take any notice. At the end of 1979 I didn't renew my membership, and later responded to an advertisement for the SDP shortly before its formation."



New town gang of four: Stevenage Social Democrats (from left to right) Edward Spriggs, executive member; Margaret Latham, vice-chairman of the area SDP; Peter Metcalfe, chairman of the area SDP; and prospective parliamentary candidate Ben Stoneham. (Photograph by John Timbers)



The original Limehouse gang of four: Bill Rodgers, Shirley Williams, Roy Jenkins and Dr David Owen

In one respect, however, Stevenage is atypical of the national pattern: in 1981, when the party was launched two months after the Limehouse Declaration by the Gang of Four, it attracted an initial membership of 51,000, rising to 70,000 in early 1982, only to fall in the wake of the Falklands war and level off again to its present 53,000. Locally it has expanded from the 70 who attended the inaugural meeting in June 1981 at Stevenage leisure centre to a current high of 515, compared with Labour's 800 and the Conservative's 700. Two other factors bear the unmistakable hallmarks of the image which the SDP is at pains to project to the country: first, the flood of newsletters through the doors of the town and its environs, full of community sentiments and the caring noises of the liberal middle class; second, the style and background of the two pivotal figures in the party's push for hearts, minds, money and votes. Mr Peter Metcalfe, the area party chairman, is marketing information manager at Bowater Containers in Ditchmore Lane. He is a former Labour activist, with years of experience as a party manager and election organizer. Like Ireton, his membership dates from Limehouse. He has the measured informality typical of SDP men, talks of Jenkins as "Woy", enjoys his food, and does an alpha-minus imitation of Tony Benn. "We've chipped away at the Labour vote in the town and I doubt whether it will come back", he says. "I suppose it keeps what you might call the armpit vote, that is many of the old people and unemployed. The middle of the town is more solidly Labour than the edges, but the older ones there are starting to die off." He reckons that in Stevenage about half the members are fellow-defectors from Labour, 20 per cent from the Tories, and the remainder, in his words, "political virgins". The prospective candidate, Ben Stoneham, is another embodiment of the middle way - young (37), Cambridge-educated and, again, a communicator, working as an industrial relations executive with the Portsmouth and Sunderland newspaper group. He also contested Saffron Walden for Labour in 1979, and at the by-election there two years earlier. Apart from the Shirley Factor, Stoneham identifies two main reasons for the apparent viability

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE SDP

The first decisive rallying call for the creation of the Social Democratic Party came in November 1979 when Mr Roy Jenkins, then retiring President of the European Commission, made a speech calling for a new radical centre in British politics. On January 25, 1981, the "gang of four" - Roy Jenkins, Dr David Owen, Shirley Williams and Mr William Rodgers - all former Labour Cabinet Ministers, issued the "Limehouse Declaration" rejecting Labour policies and announcing plans for a Council for Social Democracy. The SDP was launched on March 26, 1981, with Roy Jenkins as leader and the immediate support of 13 MPs from the Labour camp. Three by-elections - the victory at Crosby by Shirley Williams, the first MP elected in the SDP cause, and Roy Jenkins's earlier narrow defeat at Warrington and his success at Hildeshead, confirmed the party's political substance, before the Falklands War revived Tory fortunes. The SDP went into the General Election of June 9, 1983, with 29 seats, but came out with only six, although the Alliance won a quarter of the national vote. Shirley Williams and William Rodgers were both out. Roy Jenkins immediately announced that he would stand down as leader, and David Owen was elected leader. The SDP secured the first Alliance by-election success of the new parliament at Portsmouth South in June 1984. Last month the opinion polls showed the Alliance in second place with 33.4 per cent. George Hill

SATURDAY

The weekend starts here



Uncle Oscar's day

The world's longest limousine line rolls up to the door of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion next week in downtown Los Angeles, delivering onto the red carpet the has-been, would-be and about-to-be winners of the 58th Academy Awards, Hollywood's most glittering prizes, otherwise known as the Oscars (reputedly named after somebody's uncle). The Times looks behind the scenes at the infighting, frontstabbing and back-biting as the film world's glitterati fight for the famous statuette

Advertisement for 'Portfolio' magazine. Text includes: 'A roast for Easter', 'Festival calendar', 'Traditional leg of lamb', 'The best of British', '£42,000 to be won', 'Can you always get your copy of The Times?', 'Dear Newsagent, please deliver/save me a copy of The Times', 'NAME', 'ADDRESS'.

Playing safe with fortunes

If Hongkong's new Stock Exchange booms after it opens on April 2, the chances are it will all be put down to fang shui (wind and water), an ancient Chinese principle which holds that if buildings, furniture, roads and important works are placed in harmony with nature, and with each other, they will bring good fortune. If not, terrible things can happen. The Stock Exchange will be housed in the base of Exchange Square, one of the newest, most expensive, most beautiful and technologically advanced skyscraper complexes in the world - designed to comply with 4,000 year-old superstitions. The developers, the Hongkong Land Company, know that you ignore fang shui at your peril. So from the drawing board through to the fitting-out of the \$250 million complex of 1.5 million sq ft on the waterfront in prestigious central Hongkong they consulted professional fang shui experts, who enjoy the status and income of top surgeons. Mirrors, for instance are often used to deflect bad spirits, since they are so ugly that they cannot bear to look at themselves. The highly-respected Far Eastern Economic Review arranged their offices on expert advice after one staff member drowned, two correspondents were arrested and others fell sick. All is now well. The Hongkong Land Company were told that their Exchange Square plans, by Swiss architect Renzo Riva, had good fang shui. The 52-storey glass and pink granite double tower block had its back to the mountains for protection (hills are believed to be dragons), and so that good fortune could roll towards it - and its face to the water. The towers were curved towards each other like a man reaching his arms out to collect money. A window was inserted into the rotunda of the Stock Exchange below so the money could pour down on to the proceedings. Whether Riva's choice of materials was mainly superstitious or aesthetic is not clear, but the mirrors, polished steel and glass everywhere make the building seem an extension of the water and sky. The effect is breathtaking. Corners pointing at you are bad news; in the building they have been rounded off or extended into partitions or curved worktops. Is it all nonsense? For three years, during which its fortunes were at an alarming low, and Anglo-Chinese talks on the future were going badly, Hongkong Land went determinedly ahead with the building. Now the firm's fortunes are soaring again and 73 per cent of the office space is already let - far beyond the target. Nobody there has a word to say against fang shui. Patricia Clough

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 905

Crossword puzzle grid with clues. Clues include: 1 Maintenance (6), 5 Shellfish soup (6), 8 Eggs (3), 9 Surface layer (6), 10 Ribbon pasta (6), 11 Satirical sketch (4), 12 German housewife (8), 14 Web insect (6), 17 Sum (6), 19 Roundhead for (8), 22 Religious act (4), 24 Repressed (4,2), 25 Delicate (6), 26 Insulate casing (3), 27 Sullenly (6), 28 Arctic dweller (6). Down clues include: 2 Practical joke (5), 3 Sent forth (7), 4 Game stealer (7), 5 Major S Africa tribe (5), 6 Mock (5), 7 Discard knowledge (7), 13 Unhappy (3), 15 Dummy medication (7), 16 Snake-like fish (3), 17 Curial (7), 18 Rig frame (7), 20 Communion table (5), 21 Suggest (5), 23 Indian pole (5). Solution to No 904 is also provided.

Advertisement for ELLE magazine. Text includes: 'ELLE IS... JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING BLACK AND WHITE OUTFIT. An exclusive 4-piece offer at a dream of a price. Plus Betty Jackson, living in chaos and loving it. Bryony Brind dancing through 60-minute cookery. And Yasmin, the model who walked away from the catwalk with Simon le Bon.' Includes a photo of a woman and the magazine cover.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 20: Mr Graham Greene had the honour of being received by the Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the insignia of a Member of the Order of Merit.

COURT AND SOCIAL

morning chaired a meeting of the Committee at Buckingham Palace.
His Royal Highness, President of World Wildlife Fund International launched the 25th Anniversary Campaign of World Wildlife Fund, United Kingdom at the Institution of Civil Engineers, Great George Street, London SW1.

Memorial service

Mr O. Palme, The King of Sweden was represented by the Swedish Ambassador, who also gave an address, at a memorial service for Mr Olof Palme held in Westminster Abbey yesterday.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr W.W. Lucy and Miss C.M.L. Barra. The engagement is announced between William Ronaldson, son of Major and Mrs D.P.V. Lucy, of The Chantry, Ilminster, Somerset, and Calista, youngest daughter of Sir David and Lady Barra, of Kensington Square, Scarborough, North Yorkshire.

Memorial service

Princess Margaret of Sweden was represented by Mr John Ambler, The Deputy Lord Mayor of Westminster and Mr L.J.D. Hayward, the Lord Mayor of London, who was accompanied by Mr Sheriff Jack Neary, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

Dinners

Catania Association. The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Basil Hume, OSB, and the Abbot of Glastonbury, Abbot Peter Bevelin, O.S.B., presided over the dinner last night to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Catania Homecoming Association held in the Orchard Hall at St Benedict's School, Ealing.

OBITUARY

General Sir Ouvry Roberts, GCB, KBE, DSO, who died on March 16 at the age of 87, was a distinguished army officer who included command in some of the most testing actions of the Second World War, notably in Burma, where he commanded the 23rd Indian Division during the battle for Imphal.

OBITUARY

Battles in Iraq and Burma. The Air Officer in Charge and Roberts decided that the only hope of saving the situation was to attack. According to an offensive was begun: the enemy was assailed by every available aircraft, many of them with improvised bomb racks and manned by untrained pilots and pupils from the Flying School.

GENERAL SIR OUVRY ROBERTS

Battles in Iraq and Burma



Roberts at Imphal

which broke out when the Japanese launched their offensive which was designed to break into India. The 23rd Indian was one of the divisions of 4th Corps, which defended Imphal, the capture of which was vital to Japanese strategy.

However, though the Japanese encircled all the divisions of 4th Corps in Imphal, the troops stood firm in their positions and were supplied by air. After three months of bitter fighting, the Japanese were forced to abandon their objectives and fell back into Burma with heavy casualties.

Roberts' division, heavily engaged throughout, remained on the line for a few weeks longer to take part in the beginning of the advance to the Chindwin, after which it was withdrawn to reserve in India.

In March, 1945, he was appointed Commander of the 34th Indian Army Corps which, after the Japanese surrender, was employed in the reoccupation of Malaya and East Indian islands.

At the end of 1945 he was appointed Vice-Adjutant-General at the War Office, after two years in this post, he was GOC Northern Ireland District from 1948 to 1949. He then succeeded General Sir Brian Robertson as GOC in C Southern Command.

In his last appointment, as Quarter Master General to the Forces, it fell to him to make the arrangements for the movement and supply of the forces engaged in the Mau Mau operations in Kenya, the war in Korea, the suppression of the communist guerrillas in Malaya, the early stages of the disturbances in Cyprus, and the disorders in British Guiana in 1953; his term of office was a busy one.

Roberts was ADC General to the Queen from 1952 to 1955 and Colonel Commandant, Royal Engineers, from 1952 to 1962. On his retirement from the Army he was, from 1953 to 1960, President of Grosvenor Racing (P.C.) Limited (Canara), and held other directorships.

He was married in 1924. His only child, Major T. H. C. Roberts, died in 1955, and he was married in that year to Joyce, daughter of Eric Scorer.

MARRIAGES

Mr B.J.S. Blower and Miss S.T. Wagner. The marriage took place at St Peter, Salford, West Sussex, on Saturday, March 8, 1986, between Mr Benjamin J.S. Blower, of North Cove, Bexley, Kent, and Miss Susan T. Wagner, of 280, East Finchley Road, London N12.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

ABOUT 200 PEOPLE attended on March 18 at a service at the Parish Church of St Nicholas, Salford, to mark the death of Mr. Horacine Susan Cornhill, 83, who died on March 17, 1986.

BIRTHS

ANDERSON - On March 11th at St George's Hospital SW17 to Peter and Bill Buckley-Anderson, a second son David William.

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MAJOR PUBLIC AUCTION OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND URGENTLY REQUIRED PERSIAN CARPETS... 37, CHARLES STREET, LONDON W1.

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THE ARTS

Television Seeming to be

The second episode of *Voices* (Channel 4) presented Charles Taylor and Ernest Gellner and at once set up a dichotomy between their "modern" and "post-modern" attitudes towards what is generally described as "modern life".

Even the production seemed to recognize the visual dimension of the discussion by cutting away from one speaker in order to present the reactions of the other, and no doubt the backdrop, which resembles a carpet from a motel room, is designed as a way of rendering less stark the putative rigour of the debate.

Peter Ackroyd

Cinema Enjoyable acting in the most unlikely contexts

At odds with the KGB: Mikhail Baryshnikov between Isabella Rossellini, recalling the young Ingrid Bergman, and the mischievously shrewd Jerzy Skolimowski in *White Nights*

White Nights (PG) Odeon Leicester Square

Return of the Living Dead (18) Prince Charles

A.K. ICA

White Nights stoutly defends American ideals and way of life against the infernal machinations of the Reds. To its credit it also starts off with a couple of good scenes.

After the crash the plot gets going and the film is never the same again. The Tokyo-bound plane comes down in Siberia.

This little service to earn a better deal than singing *Porgy and Bess* in saltine canteens. Naturally, while Baryshnikov learns respect for Hines's tapping, Hines comes to see the folly of his ways.

The writer James Goldman is an experienced Hollywood professional, but his script is full of narrative holes; as improbable in diplomatic as in dramatic terms, given to long, expository speeches, and with embarrassingly obvious lines like "But why are we speaking Russian?"

Death is the greatest taboo of an age which has no longer the confidence in an after-life that reassured our grandparents; but the way that films deal with the taboo and our terrors has changed.

to return from the grave with distant decorum. Now they come with eyes dropping out and the grey flesh rotting on the bones.

Dan O'Bannon, John Carpenter's associate on his first film, *Dark Star*, and writer of *Alien*, turns the style to Grand Guignol horror-comic in his first film as director, *Return of the Living Dead*.

It is hard to advise whether A.K. should be seen before or after *Ran*. Either way, the impact of Akira Kurosawa's masterpiece is in no way impaired by Chris Marker's impressionist documentary about its making.

He stands watching, bent attentively forward, hands on knees, and we see each whole performance mirrored in his face.

For ten hours a day this mighty septuagenarian trundles about on the cindery slopes of Mount Fuji, watching and controlling everything. His confidence is such that there is rarely a hurry or ill temper.

We have a thrilling view of an artist who is completely master of his *métier*. Kurosawa is a magician, weaving spells with castles, armies, skies, cameras, smoke, fire, but he is also the practical technician, knowing every trick of the trade and attentive to every detail.

David Robinson



Rock Video obsessions

Signe Signe Sputnik National Ballroom, Kilburn

It was plain within the first minute that Signe Signe Sputnik are able to play their instruments at least as well as The Cramps, and much better than, say, The Damned or The Clash when they first performed in public.

rhythm and Star Wars soundtrack, was compelling enough. Martin Degville, shouting his indecipherable lyrics, looked nothing if not imposing with his huge orange plume of hair and *Mad Max* coat of ragged furs.

But as one song followed the next, with Neal X playing the same Chuck Berry guitar riff and the two drummers, Ray Mayhew and Chris Kavanagh, playing the same metronomic unison beat, the excitement began to pall; although they kept time with implacable precision, it was particularly disappointing to hear two drummers combining to produce such a weedy sound.

David Sinclair

Theatre Why the action stalls

After Aida Old Vic

I thought at the time that Ken Ludwig's *Lead Me a Tenor* was a remarkable piece of music-theatre, but after *Cafe Fucini* and now this Verdiian indiscretion from Julian Mitchell, it is beginning to look like a masterpiece. Heaven defend the operatic stage from opera enthusiasts.

David Sinclair



Long obsessive wall of resentment: Richard Griffiths and Gemma Jones as Verdi and his wife

Worse is in store when it comes to character. Richard Griffiths comes forward to deliver his opening self-portrait as the composer. In a show designed for operatic innocents, you might suppose that there would be some reference to Verdi's heroic nationalism, and his place as a larger-than-life figure in the cultural risorgimento.

Opera Demons at work

La finta giardiniera Bloomsbury

This Park Lane Opera production of Mozart's maturest unknown comedy is by no means entirely successful, but that only makes it the more tantalizing. For if *La finta giardiniera* is so beguiling and fascinating when staged in unrelieved black, and rather boisterously accompanied, heaven knows what impression it might make in a more sympathetic and assured presentation.

It is, after all, a garden piece, which is why the costumes of woe, by Paul Dart, and the geometrical shapes of Robert Carsen's production look so obviously wrong. Perhaps the intention is to remind us that the many playful and not so playful love intrigues are founded on an act of violent passion, that there are demons at work beneath all the pretence and self-deception.

Paul Griffiths

by Mozart, even if he was only aged 18 at the time and cocking slightly adolescent, but also extraordinary, snooks at the machinery of the genre.

For example, there is an aria for the Podesta that becomes the excuse for a miniature concerto for orchestra as he mentions all the instruments he hears, and another for the baritone swain, Nardo, parodies the vocal styles of three nations, thereby including a strain of the French pastoral Mozart never wrote. Returning to what he did write, Nicholas Cleobury conducts a willing if unpolished orchestral performance. But it is one with much fine singing from young professionals, particularly Alison Hagley, as the sentimental heroine, Anne Mason as the arrogant, feeling Ramiro, and Janis Kelly and John Cashmore as the lively couple from below stairs.

Most of the characters inevitably seem on the point of blossoming into others better known. Ramiro, for instance, is about to become Cherubino. But these performances show the work to have an atmosphere and quality of its own. It is well worth catching tonight or tomorrow.

Paul Griffiths

Concert RPO/Ashkenazy Festival Hall

It was the double-bass heartbeats at the end of his solo cantata *La Mort de Cleopâtre* which got Berlioz into so much trouble with the judges at the Académie des Beaux Arts. And it was the same alarmingly stark reiterated notes which set the pulse for Wednesday's performance by Jessye Norman and the Royal Philharmonic under Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Norman has always made Berlioz's "scène lyrique", in which Cleopatra reflects on meeting her ancestors after her death and dishonour, into a live drama of flesh and blood. Not for her the classic sarcophagus sculpture of a Janet Baker. "Ah! qu'il sont loins ces jours", which carries the perfumed nostalgia of the *Nuits d'été* in its harmonies, was brought out of a retrospective morose-voice into the vivid immediacy of present regret.

Hilary Finch

spirits of Rameau and Gluck, was whispered urgently in near *sprechgesang*, wonderfully shifting from awe to terror through its modulating repetitions.

Nothing more robust or less Gallic would do as a context for this *tour de force* of imaginative re-creation. Debussy provided the environment before and after the interval. At the start, there were the *Nocturnes*, with an inappropriately corporeal choir of "Sirenes" (the women of the London Symphony Chorus, rather too close for comfort) and, to make up for it, the most ethereal of "Nuages". Ashkenazy achieved a deceptive stillness by concentrating on minutely rhythmic rather than dynamic movement, so that the cor anglais bit through the strings' texture like a hard line of body colour over wash.

At the end, Ashkenazy constructed *La Mer* with truly symphonic strength, though there were times when his orchestra could have given the edge by providing quicker, more sharply defined responses.

Irving Wardle

condition of frenzied exasperation, spitting out excuses for having failed to finish the job, and sometimes pursued through the stalls by Ricordi and Faccio in the style of a Mack Sennett film.

The effect throughout is to reduce the events to that of Hollywood biography. As the story fails to include the obligatory midway disaster, much is made of Verdi's reluctance to join in the enterprise, with many a little scene showing him briefly holding court and then shambling back to his lair. Come the second act and we find dialogue like "Iago should have a song - a Credo" and

A message from JOSEPH COOPER, O.B.E.



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Advertisement for Echo Park, featuring a large image of a park scene and text: 'A Film of great warmth and wit', Sunday Telegraph. NOW SHOWING at CANNON and CHELSEA-CINEMA.

Advertisement for the film 'RAN' by Akira Kurosawa. Text: 'KUROSAWA IS A PHENOMENON WITHOUT PARALLEL... RAN TAKES FILM SPECTACLE TO NEW HEIGHTS... A LANDMARK IN CINEMA HISTORY'. NOW SHOWING at GATE CINEMA.

Advertisement for Lesley Mackie at the Strand Theatre. Text: 'REDUCED PRICE PREVIEW TONIGHT! introducing LESLEY MACKIE as Judy Garland'. Strand Theatre 01-836 2660.

WALL STREET

New York (Reuters) — Stocks slipped lower on Wednesday as blue chips fell under pressure from organized selling activities, traders said. The Dow Jones industrial average, which touched 1,797 earlier in the day, closed at 1,787.95, down 1.52. There were 762 issues advancing, 853 declining and 444 unchanged. Volume totalled 151,419,000 shares compared with 149,360,000 shares on Tuesday. The New York Stock Exchange composite index was 135.7, down 0.13. The American Stock Exchange closed lower in moderate trading. The market value index fell 1.49 to 266.20. The price of an average share decreased eight cents.

Table with columns for stock symbols (e.g., IBM, GE, Ford) and their corresponding prices and changes.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

Table showing Sterling Spot and Forward Rates for various currencies and locations.

DOLLAR SPOT RATES

Table showing Dollar Spot Rates for various international locations.

MONEY MARKETS AND GOLD

Table detailing Money Markets and Gold prices, including Euro Money Deposits and Gold prices.

OTHER STERLING RATES

Table showing Other Sterling Rates for various currencies.

EURO MONEY DEPOSITS %

Table showing Euro Money Deposits percentages for different terms.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table showing London Financial Futures prices for various contracts.

COMMODITIES

Table showing Commodity prices for various goods like sugar, cocoa, and metals.

COMMODITIES

Large table showing Commodity prices for various goods including metals, oil, and agricultural products.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table showing Investment Trusts with columns for company names, prices, and changes.

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Extensive table listing various financial services, funds, and investment products with their respective prices and details.

TEMPUS

Tough decisions ahead for Britoil chiefs

Last summer, while the Government was selling the second tranche of Britoil shares, the company said, in connection with its profits forecast in the prospectus for the six months to December 1985, that each £1 change in the oil price would mean a difference of £5 million to £8 million in net income for the half year. This would be equivalent to approximately £10 million in a full year.

and some tough decisions will have to be made. One of these decisions will be about next year's dividend. Keeping to its intention made at the time it was sold, Britoil is recommending a 9p final, giving a total dividend for 1985 of 13p. On forecast net income of under £100 million of 20p per share, the cover is 1.5 times.

Turner & Newall

Inevitably, it is the £13 million turnaround in asbestos claims rather than Turner & Newall's trading performance which grabs the headlines and more than explains the jump in pretax profits from £27.5 million to £39.6 million.

legacy of harder times, £64 million of British tax losses remains to boost the improved UK results expected for this year. The shares look well supported.

Legal & General

Legal & General surprised the market with disappointing 1985 results. The shares lost 27p to 757p but recovered to close unchanged at 754p. Pretax profits fell 34.5 per cent to £31.5 million, although the effect on the bottom line was reduced to a 15.7 per cent fall after tax and extraordinary credits worth £6.2 million.

Schroder's profits rise 17%

By Richard Thomson Banking Correspondent

J Henry Schroder Wagg, the merchant bank, yesterday revealed an increase in after tax profits of 17.6 per cent for last year. The group's corporate finance and investment management activities produced record results.

Prudential purchase

The Prudential Corporation, Britain's largest life company, has bought Pearsons, the Hampshire residential and commercial estate agent, for an undisclosed sum.

Budget euphoria sends equities to new peaks

STOCK MARKET REPORT

The stock market surged again yesterday as investors continued to recognize the profit potential for companies after the Budget, lower interest rates and the bright outlook for inflation. After pausing for breath mid-session, share prices soared to close at a record 1415.1, up 25.6, on the FT 30-share index. The FT-SE gained 30.3 at 1690.1.

Some dealers were forecasting another cut in base rates before Easter as sterling held firm against other leading currencies. Government securities climbed another two points in early trading before trimming the gains by around half a point during the afternoon.

All equity sectors shared in the buoyancy but banks, stores, leisure and buildings were well to the fore. Company trading statements brought additional cheer and the only gloomy faces were those of stock jobbers who are being squeezed as stock becomes increasingly short in supply.

ing confirmation that it had acquired over 6 per cent of S&W Berisford. Beecham added 13p to 378p on further reaction to the reorganization moves.

Brokers' recommendations for banks were numerous. Midland climbed 30p to 554p and National Westminster 48p to 935p. Life insurers were dull at first still upset by the threat of competition from the Government's Personal Equity Plan. Legal & General dropped to 767p after a 35 per cent decline in profits but later rallied to 779p down 5p as buyers returned during the afternoon.

Of the many companies reporting, Turner & Newall jumped 23p to 210p on the absence of the much-feared rights issue and a better-than-expected 44 per cent profit increase. Octopus was hoisted 30p to 665p after earnings up by 50 per cent while Reed International improved 13p to 854p on the sale of Hamlyn to Octopus.

Smith & Nephew was 13p dearer at 256p following a 27 per cent profit increase. Insurance brokers were overshadowed by the strength of sterling against the dollar. Willis Faber lost 20p to 424p on further consideration of Wednesday's figures.

Prudential, which has expanded into estate agents with the purchase of Pearson of Windsor, reversed an initial 15p fall at 894p. Buoyant discount houses featured Union Discount at 733p up

In foods, Cadbury Schweppes rose 4p to 185p in anticipation of early news of the sale of the Typhoo subsidiary. Dee Corporation eased 5p to 283p on news of a substantial acquisition in America. Tate & Lyle was marked up 12p to 615p follow-

P&O with results next Tuesday gained 28p to 556p. British Aerospace, reporting on the same day, was lifted 18p to 586p. Good results on Wednesday boosted DRG another 13p to 300p. Tobacco continued to ignore the revenue increases with Imperial Group up 6p to 341p awaiting bid news.

RECENT ISSUES

Table with columns for EQUITIES and RECENT ISSUES, listing various stocks and their prices.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Table with columns for RIGHTS ISSUES, listing companies and their share prices.

In merchant banks

Schroders jumped 90p to 1578 pence on the results and scrip proposal. Disappointing profits knocked 11p from Blanchards at 120p and 4p from CCF at 114p.

THE LEGAL & GENERAL OUTLOOK

A brighter outlook after an unsettled year.

The past year has presented insurance companies with their fair share of problems, and we are no exception. But our confidence in the underlying financial strength and quality of our business is well reflected in this year's final dividend and bonus share issue, though we do have to report a disappointing level of shareholders' profit.

of our US life operations have been reflected in excellent new business figures. However, there have been heavy reinsurance losses and the strengthening of Sterling has had an adverse effect on the life results.

UK Operations

While the volume of new business growth in life insurance did not compare with the outstandingly successful years of '83 and '84, we have maintained our existing share in the conventional house purchase market. Insured group pensions achieved very satisfactory levels of new business growth.

Investment Management

The total amount of funds under our management has continued to grow, and now stands at £11 billion. The expansion of our unit trust activities last September signalled the introduction of a number of new investment products, and this confirms our role as a major fund manager as well as a conventional insurer.

International Operations

All our international operating companies showed very good new business growth. In particular, our strenuous efforts to increase the scale

The Future

Having weathered a difficult year, Legal & General is firmly positioned to consolidate its place in the insurance and investment markets. To find out more, reserve your own copy of our forthcoming annual report either by sending us the coupon below or ringing Teledata on 01-200 0200 right now. You'll find our long-term outlook bright.

Table comparing 1985 and 1984 performance across various categories: Life & pensions profits, USA life profits, Fund management profits, etc.

Form for requesting the 1985 Legal & General Annual Report, including fields for Name, Address, and Postcode.

Hill Samuel Base Rate

With effect from the close of business on 21st March, 1986, Hill Samuel's Base Rate for lending will be decreased from 12.5% to 11.5% per annum.

Hill Samuel & Co. Limited 100 Wood Street, London EC2P 2AJ. Telephone: 01-628 8011.

Superdrug

Table showing Preliminary Results for Superdrug, comparing 1985 and 1986 performance.

A most exciting and rewarding year, both in terms of profitability and future opportunities. Our new 200,000 sq. ft. Northern Regional Distribution Centre opened on time, and began servicing 50 stores in the North of the country in September.

COMPANY NEWS

ARMSTRONG EQUIPMENT: The directors say they have considerable confidence in the future, and have raised the interim dividend to 0.75p (0.3). Figures in £000 for half year ended December 31, Pretax pft 3,510 (1,512). Earnings per share 5.86p (2.44).

Handwritten note in Arabic script at the top right of the page.

YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Banking on support for LGS

By Derek Harris

A full commitment by the high street banks to the Government's loan guarantee scheme (LGS) has from time to time been called into question...

They are any rate pleased the Government is now committed for three years to the scheme. At National Westminster, Andrew Lloyd, the small business section manager, said: "This is a major step forward as far as marketing by the banks is concerned..."

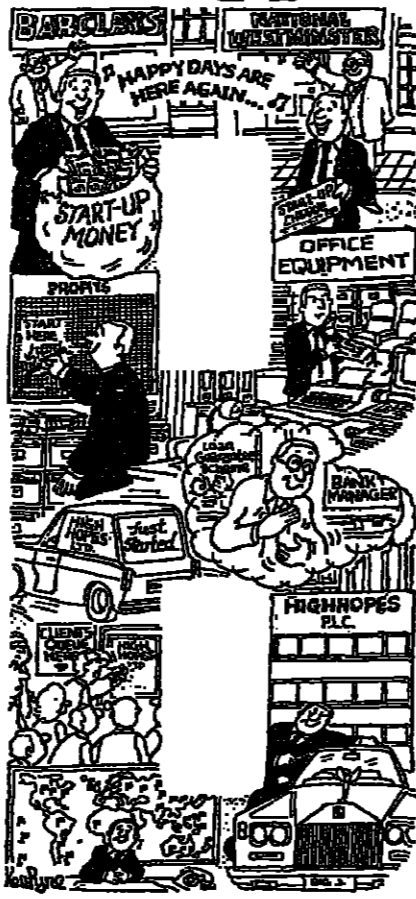
At Barclays Bank, which also claims to be a long-time supporter of the scheme, Peter Clark, manager of the small business unit, believes there will now be a gradual build-up in usage of the scheme...

The failure rate of businesses using the scheme, at one time one in three or worse, is no longer a bugbear at any rate for Barclays. Recently the bank has experienced a failure rate in the region of only 5 per cent.

One problem Barclays is still trying to iron out with the Government is bringing the scheme's documentation into line with the Consumer Credit Act. Until this is cleared up, loans of less than £15,000 are unavailable at Barclays under the scheme.

Not all banks take the same view. Average loans under the scheme are about £30,000 anyway, which is why some are banking believe the £75,000 loans ceiling kept for the new scheme still gives sufficient headroom.

Interest premiums paid over and above the going rate for bank loans will now be halved compared with the past 20 months. The premium is 2.5 per cent



on 70 per cent of a loan which is guaranteed. Another way to do the sum is to take the total loan and allow for a premium of 1.75 per cent. This is a lesser premium than when the scheme was first launched in the middle of 1981...

The mental block which so many small businesses have had over securing funds by releasing an equity stake in what they regard very much as their own creation seems to be easing, according to the Peat Marwick report on the Business Expansion Scheme.

The report came out on Budget day as the Chancellor conferred an unlimited life on the scheme, tightening it up for asset-backed ventures while also extending it. Bringing some ship chartering within its scope is aimed at helping small businesses because it is typically the owner skipper which is involved in coastal chartering.

The BES has made companies more aware of equity financing and helped make the entrepreneur more willing to release a stake of equity in a business, said Peat Marwick, one of Britain's biggest accountants and consultants. Investors are also more interested in unquoted companies.

But it found there had been a trend towards larger and so possibly less risky investments. It also confirmed that BES funds typically do not invest below £150,000. The report said: "There may still be gaps in the equity market. Our study indicates that it is difficult to raise BES finance over £50,000 directly..."

One development which might help narrow the equity gap below £150,000 has been community based initiatives to introduce individual investors to local small businesses. Peat Marwick foresees a small but nevertheless important role for these initiatives.

In a sample of 120 companies some 17 per cent had ceased trading after about 18 months. Many of the companies interviewed were financially unsophisticated, according to the report. Patently, more small businesses should seek advice on how better to run their business. There are plenty of places to go for that from the local enterprise agency to the Government's small firms service and its corps of counsellors.

to business planning is incorporated. There is an audit sheet for 41 different topics in the areas of management, marketing and finance. At £45 it comes in a looseleaf binder from McGraw Hill, Shoppentangers Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2QL (Tel: Maidenhead 23432).

A £10,000 award scheme to benefit small businesses has been launched by Gallaher, Britain's second largest tobacco manufacturer. It is aimed at businesses with 50 employees or less in Northern Ireland, one of Gallaher's manufacturing bases, and will single out outstanding examples of business development. The winner will be expected to invest the prize money in the business. A company's strong commitment to a local community will be one factor taken into account. Contact: Gallaher Business Challenge, Po Box 9, Newtownabbey, BT37 0PP.

Five students at Imperial College of Science and Technology have been studying the problems of setting up a business in high technology areas and have charted various market openings. Starting Up - a report on small high-tech business costs £15. It is available from Group Seven Enterprises, Room 303, Spherfield Building, Imperial College of Science and Technology, London SW7 2AZ.

BRIEFING

■ Few managers in small businesses do anything about company training even though they realise it is essential in maximising productivity and profits, according to a survey, out today, carried out for the Manpower Services Commission. Businesses with fewer than 25 workers were surveyed and less than 40 per cent had carried out any training in the previous 12 months. Four out of five employees had received no training.

The upshot, announced yesterday by Bryan Nicholson, the MSC chairman, is a six-month campaign by the MSC to demonstrate to small firms how training pays off. Locally practical advice will be given on how to secure effective training. There are grants available. Contact: M Fearn, Room W825, Manpower Services Commission, Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ. Small firms survey is free.

■ Another attempt to tackle the perennial problem of the small business principal who ideally needs every management skill is The Business Analyst. A self-assessment approach

Business Services

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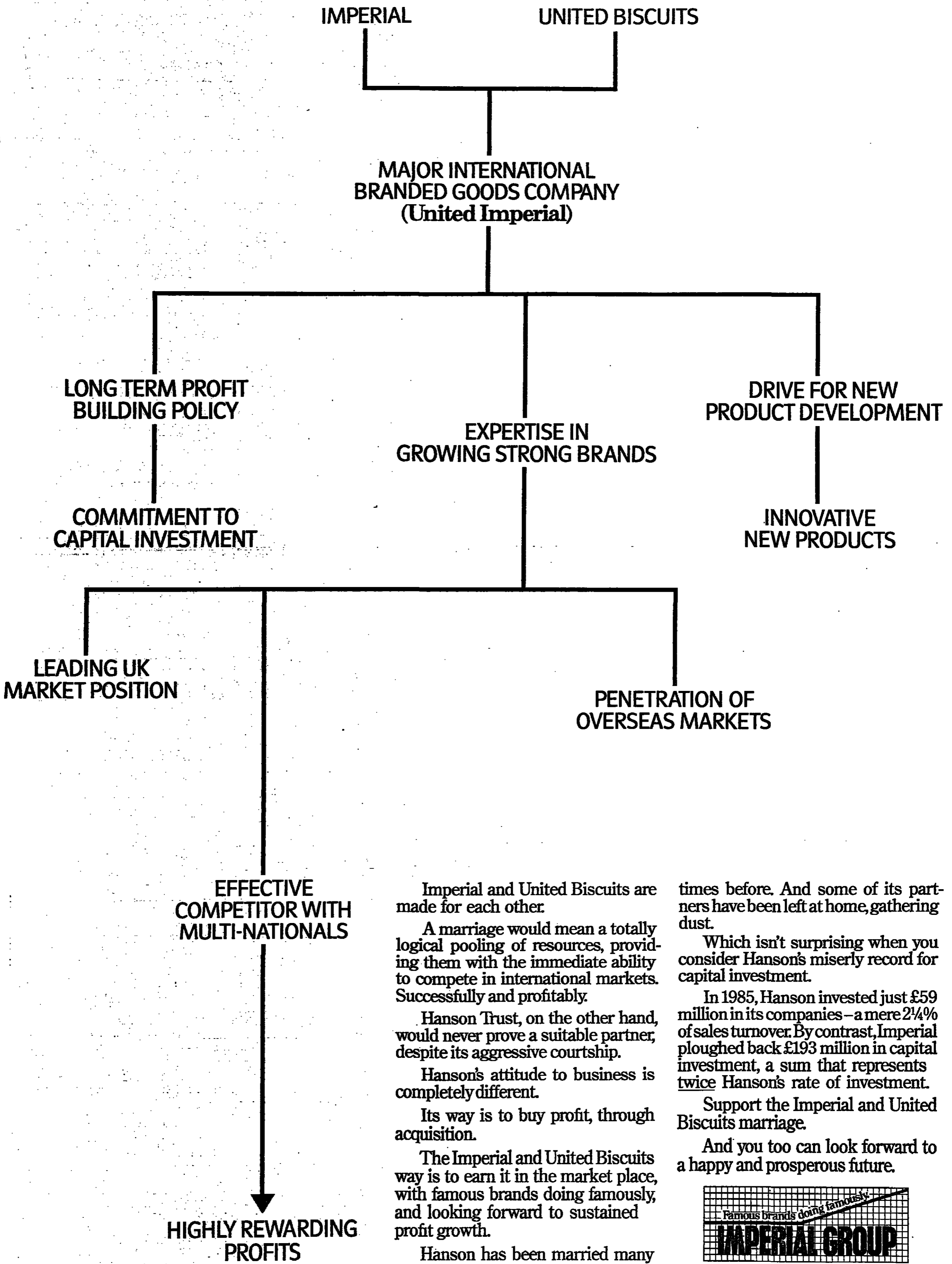
DIARY OF THE TIMES CLASSIFIED... Over 1-4 million of the most affluent people in the country read the classified columns of The Times. The following categories appear regularly every week, and are generally accompanied by relevant editorial articles...

Vertical text on the left edge of the page, possibly a page number or identifier.

Handwritten note: 100 is 100

The marriage of Imperial and United Biscuits.

(And how to be an heir to the fortune)



The sources for the information contained in this advertisement are set out or referred to in the letter from the Chairman, Imperial Group plc to shareholders dated 13th February 1986. The directors of Imperial Group plc (including those who have delegated detailed supervision of this advertisement) have taken all reasonable care to ensure that the facts stated and opinions expressed herein are fair and accurate. The directors accept responsibility accordingly.

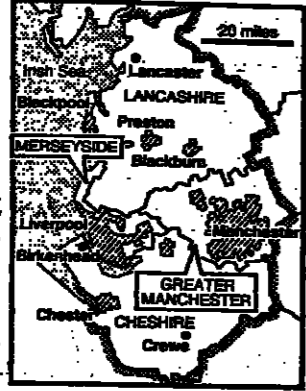
April 1986

March 21, 1986 By Peter Davenport

A land being born again

Venue for the 21st century

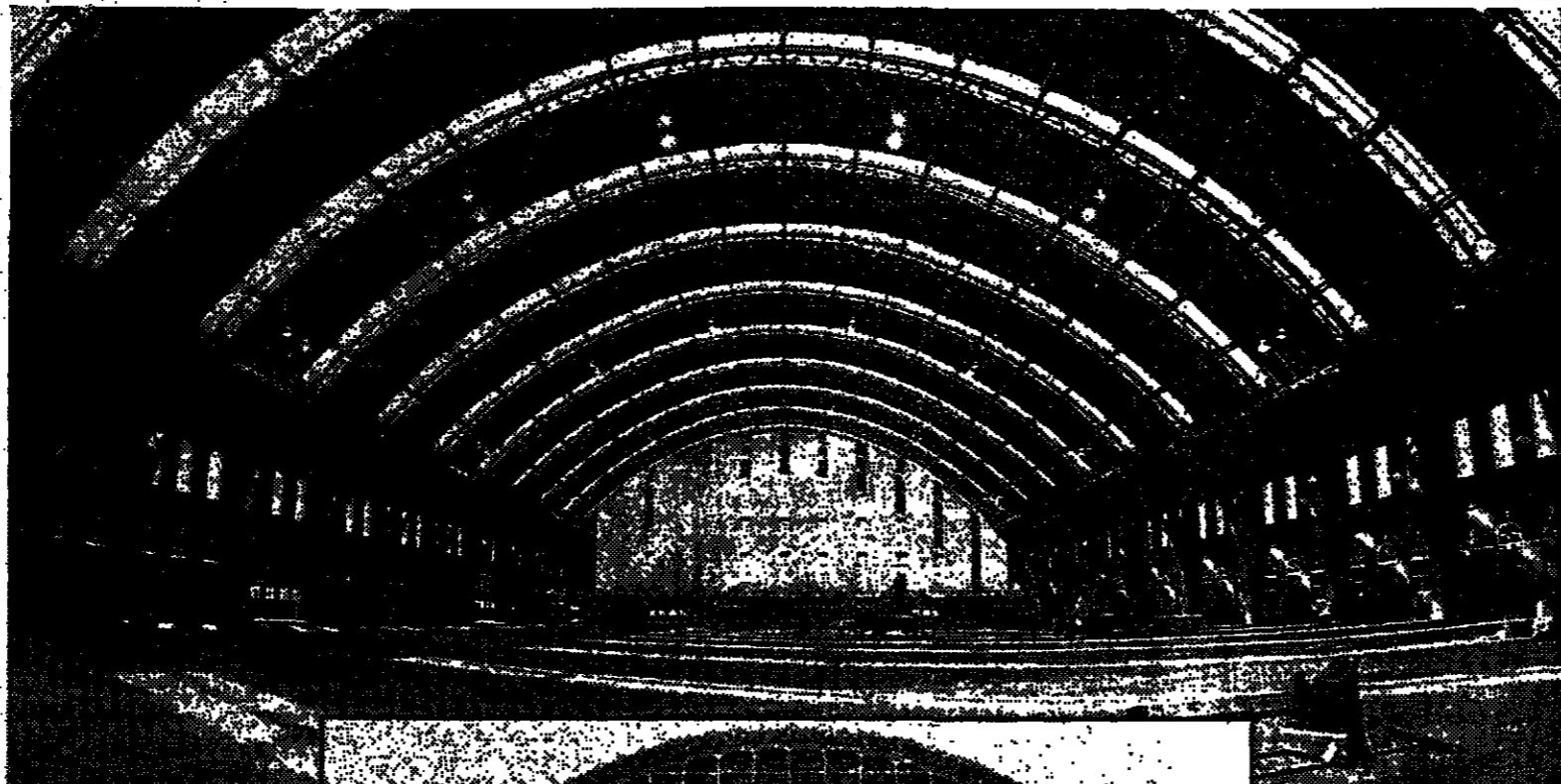
Britain's North West region is being transformed by a series of imaginative ventures which include the Greater Manchester Exhibition and Events Centre to be opened today by the Queen.



The fight to rid the North West of its ugly legacy of the Industrial Revolution will have twin benefits. It will not only improve the daily lot of the people who live and work in its towns and cities, it will also make the environment of the region much more attractive to outside investors who are needed to provide the new jobs so badly needed.

It will, inevitably, be a long-term programme but there are already multi-million-pound schemes forging ahead in Liverpool, Manchester and Salford and many smaller towns. The Government, through the Department of the Environment, is pumping more than £100 million a year into the area through its basket of urban aid programmes and derelict land grants. Much of it is tied in partnership deals with local authorities and private industry. And many of the schemes are turning once derelict, decaying relics of the industrial past into imaginative, attractive developments.

In Liverpool, the Merseyside Development Corporation has inspired the £100 million complete refurbishment of the Albert Dock area into a waterfront village of shops, restaurants, galleries,

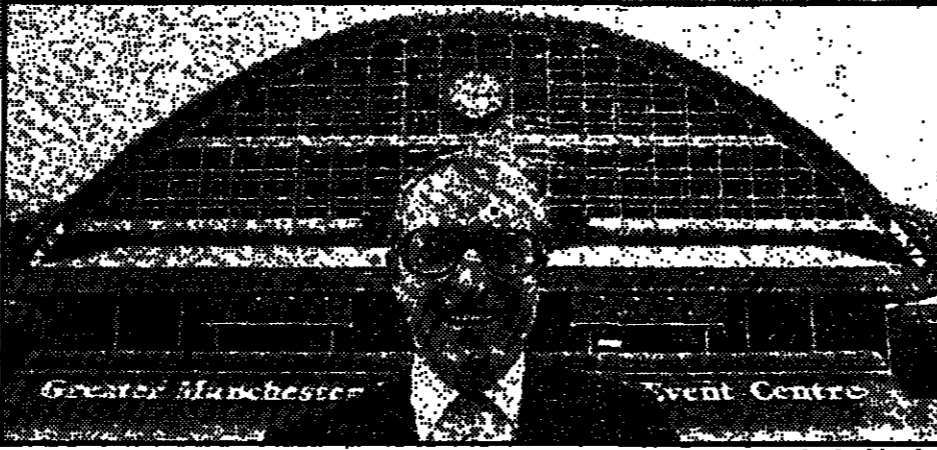


museums and luxury apartments. A further 200 acres of disused dockland is also to be redeveloped into a series of major tourist attractions.

The city council has a rolling urban regeneration strategy for the demolition of old, decaying tenements and a rebuilding of new homes no more than two storeys high. A range of sports facilities for the inner city is being developed and there is a programme of improving parkland in the area and schemes for enhancing the general environment.

Once derelict land is also being reclaimed imaginatively. A 64-acre former railway marshalling yard has been transformed, with 62,000 trees and 100,000 shrubs, into the Wavertree Technology Park with the potential for 2,000 hi-tech jobs.

On the site of the former Racquets Club, a gentlemen's club that was destroyed in the Forthgate riots of 1981, a scheme by the Rural Preserva-



Back from obscurity: Manchester's central station finds an exciting new role in the North West's transformation as the G-MEX exhibition centre with Frank Winter at the helm.

tion Association has brought a touch of the countryside to an urban area in a low cost programme to make the site more attractive while it is held in a land bank for later development.

There are many other examples of a new use for once derelict land. A recent study into the problem of wasteland by the University of Liverpool's Environmental Advisory Unit warned: "If

land is left degraded, with only the tattered remnants of its former youth to proclaim its past, we are guilty of two major transgressions.

"First, that a valuable resource is being wasted and second, that our environment and that of our children is being eroded."

When the Queen visits the region today she will see two prime examples of the regeneration of former derelict

Former rundown council flats sold to Barratts, the builders, have been transformed into desirable, private homes. Salford's former docks are being transformed in a £175 million project that will see high-grade private housing, a hi-tech industrial site and a 165-bed hotel.

A big improvement to the environment of the whole region will be the outcome of a 25-year, £4 billion programme to clean up the entire Mersey Basin. The initial work has attracted a £67 million grant from the European Development Fund to be spent in the first three years of work.

In Manchester, where the new exhibition centre and the renovation of the Midland Hotel together with development of the Castlefield complex of museums and tourist attractions have revitalized the city centre, there are also plans to turn disused office blocks, and even a former fire station, into hotels.

When the Central Station was opened in Manchester at the end of the last century, it was to bring the goods and the people of the Industrial Revolution into the heart of a great city.

Today when the Queen officially opens the renovated train hall as the Greater Manchester Exhibition and Event Centre, its developers hope it will signal a period of 21st-century prosperity.

The new complex, with its unique city-centre site and blend of highly adaptable internal facilities, will make Manchester into an important rival to the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham and London.

Interest was keen long before the centre was completed. Frank Winter, the general manager of G-MEX, the management company running the centre, says: "We are highly satisfied with the way things are going. There is a tremendous gap for such a centre in the north and because of our unique location right in the heart of the city, we may take business away from the NEC."

"We have 28 exhibitions booked between now and November and will achieve our predicted third-year results in the first year." Its first exhibition earlier this month was on the theme of industrial enterprise in the North West with 150 exhibiting companies.

Because of its large internal space, unblemished by a single pillar and with a roof arching 85 feet above the floor in a single span, it is ideal for athletics meetings, tennis tournaments, equestrian events, classical and rock music concerts.

Manchester's international airport is a 25-minute drive away, there is an excellent network of motorways and regular inter-city train services into Victoria and Piccadilly stations. There are a wide range of hotels, night clubs, theatres and restaurants, all within a few minutes' walk of the centre.

The creation of the exhibition complex is expected to inject £14 million of extra

business. This will also involve an extra 134,000 bed-nights for the nearby hotels.

The transformation of the old Central Station from a derelict dinosaur of a bygone age to an ultra-modern exhibition venue is just one phase of an ambitious scheme to renovate 26 acres of inner-city wasteland.

When completed it will see the major refurbishment of the old Midland Hotel into a five-star Holiday Inn. The rebirth of the station has cost £20 million and refurbishment of the Midland Hotel will cost a further £14.6 million. The entire 26-acre scheme is due for completion by the end of the next decade.



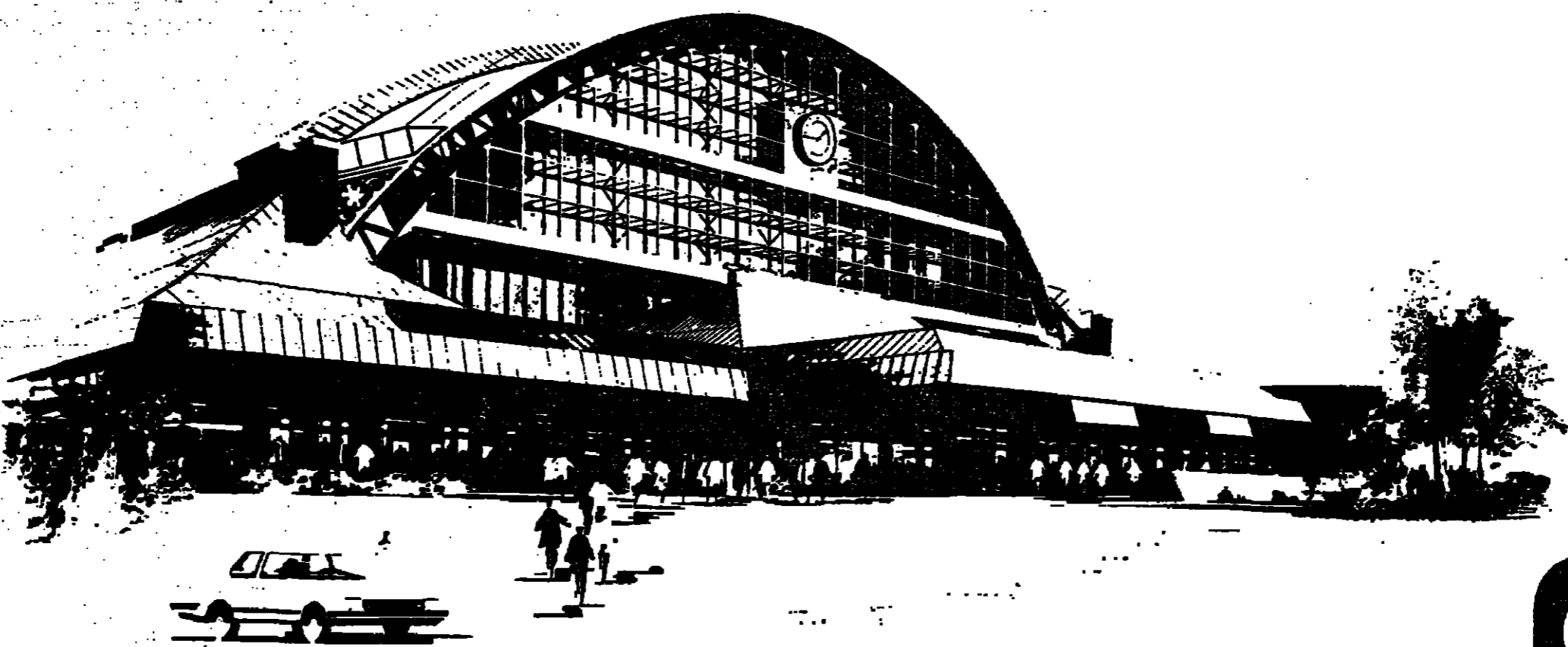
John Bojler: a modern centre sympathetic to history

To facilitate the development, the Greater Manchester Council formed Central Station Properties Ltd, a company jointly owned on an equal basis with Commercial Union Assurance.

The renovation of Central Station was a daunting task. It opened in July 1980 to provide a link with the existing road network and extensive canal system around Manchester. It was expanded a decade later with the opening of the Great Northern Warehouse, now a listed building, to be redeveloped as part of the scheme.

But economic and transport changes led to a steady decline Continued on page 24

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Commercial Union in association with Greater Manchester Council is proud to have formed Central Station Properties Ltd - a unique joint development



FOCUS

THE NORTH WEST/3

The shake-up coming after the abolition

The political map of the North West runs the entire spectrum from the solid Tory seats of rural Cheshire to the Militant stronghold of Liverpool. Four million of the region's population are in for a political change at the end of this month when the metropolitan counties of Greater Manchester and Merseyside are abolished.

They are to disappear in the local government shake-up that will also end the Greater London Council and four other metropolitan authorities.

Many of the responsibilities of the county authorities will be given back to the district councils and to a series of boards. Residuary bodies in Manchester and Liverpool will oversee the winding-up of the councils, dispose of surplus property and handle compensation payments for staff left without jobs to go to.

The reorganization has been designed to remove a tier of bureaucracy and to return more power to people in their own locality. But critics say that it will merely lead to

a slowing-down in services and an increase in rates as well as bureaucratic chaos.

The Greater Manchester council, which covers an area of 497 square miles and a population of 2.5 million, has responsibilities for highways, buses, planning, refuse, recreation, arts, consumer services, the police and fire service.

In the aftermath of abolition, there will be joint boards consisting of representatives from each of the 10 district councils in the area to run refuse collections, the police, fire services and highways with the funding being shared among the authorities.

The GMC employs 16,600 and with only weeks before the abolition deadline, all but 540 have found other jobs to go to, many joining the district councils.

Bernard Clarke, Labour leader of the county council, is critical of the new arrangements. He believes they will prove so unsuccessful that another reorganization, the third

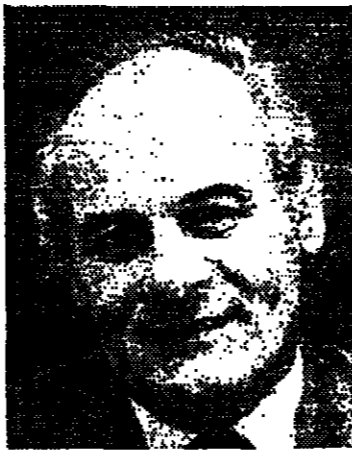
since 1974, would be required within a few years.

He argues that not only will services to the public slow down as 10 authorities try to agree on a common approach but that the ratepayers will find themselves paying out more money to receive less.

The GMC is the largest metropolitan county outside London and it has been calculated, he said, that the new arrangements will cost an extra £15 million a year.

Mr Clarke says that the abolition and the combined effects of new transport regulations will push up bus fares and lead to 2,000 job losses in the area. But the main blow will be the ending of a regional voice on a large scale, long term economic issues, which, he says, are vital to efforts to revitalize many of the industrially depressed areas within its boundaries.

Mr Clarke said: "Abolition has been done for political reasons - there is no doubt about that. I am a



Bernard Clarke: A critic politician but I see the regions doing a very important, strategic, economic job and nobody is stepping in to pick up those pieces."

Merseyside County Council, which stretches from Southport in

the north to Wirral in the south, encompasses five district authorities, three Labour-controlled, two Conservative.

The leader of the council, Labour's Kevan Coombes, is blunt about the problems of the immediate future. He said: "A lot of opportunities for much-needed progress in economic development will be missed especially those on the large scale."

"You will have to get agreement on issues between five local authorities, some of whom can't even talk to each other, with one side trying to put the other side in jail (a reference to the Labour councillors of Liverpool and their court case appealing against orders of surcharge and bankruptcy by the District Auditor)."

For the four million people directly affected by the reorganization, the coming months will provide the answer to whether they will be better or worse off for the changes.

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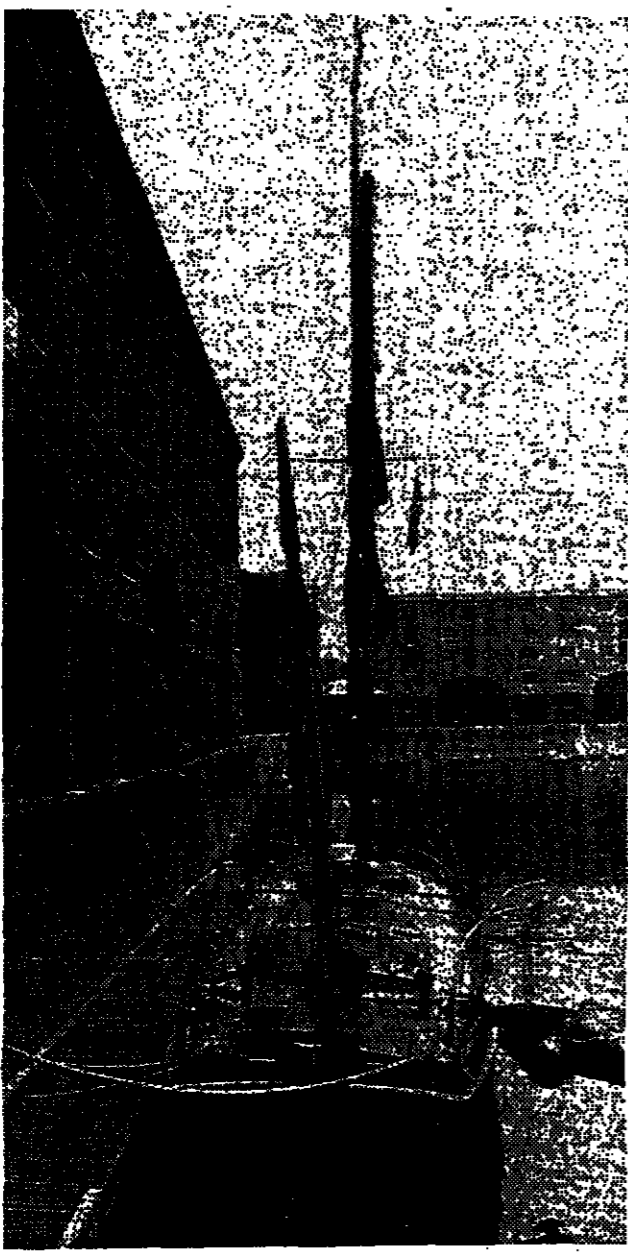
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Tourists by the million



Traditional but businesslike: Liverpool's Albert Dock.

From the bright and frequently breezy delights of Blackpool to the wide open spaces of the Peak District, from stately homes to the Maritime Museum in Liverpool, the North West boasts a varied agenda for tourists.

Many of its attractions have been imaginatively recreated from the once-sorry relics of its industrial past - for example, the impressive Albert Dock waterfront development in Liverpool and the Wigan Pier complex.

The region's two leading cities, Manchester and Liverpool, have an abundance of theatres, orchestras, museums, art galleries and restaurants. It is also home to successful football clubs and has fine sporting facilities.

'Sole growth industry in some parts'

The region now attracts 12 million visitors a year. British tourists spend about £430 million annually; those from abroad a further £143 million. Up to 100,000 jobs depend directly or indirectly on tourism.

The industry is vital to a local economy that has suffered in the recession and by the decline of once-traditional, large-scale employing industries.

According to Anthony Goldstone, chairman of the North West Tourist Board, tourism is the only growth industry in many parts of the region. Its continued development is vital to its future economic health.

He said: "Tourism is vital. It is going to be our saviour as a region. The industrial revolution began here and it has been our lifeblood but that situation has changed."

"Unemployment is catastrophic because large-scale engineering has gone and the size of the textile industry is laughable compared with what it was just 10 years ago."

"We have a situation where we either die or take on new types of industry. We cannot compete with the Costa del Sol and it would be daft to talk about it. But we do have the best theatre and music outside London, art galleries, seaside resorts like Blackpool, historic towns like Chester and the Peak District."

Mr Goldstone says recent statistics disclose that only 6 per cent of people in Britain take more than one holiday abroad every year, which meant there was a vast potential of people to be persuaded to visit the North West.

Mr Goldstone added: "How valuable is tourism? Well, if it were to be banned from tomorrow morning, if someone said it is forbidden to visit the North West, this area would die. I am convinced of that. The future is in the leisure industry."

As part of the intensified drive to attract more visitors, the North West Tourist Board has linked up with the three other tourist authorities in the North to form the Northern Consortium of Tourist Boards to mount joint campaigns.

A sign of their confidence is that a roadshow destined for the United States is to visit

what for many people is the ultimate holiday destination, the West Coast, with its tradition of sand, sun and surf to try to persuade Californians to cross the Atlantic for the pleasures of the North West of England.

Tourism in the North West has increased by 12 per cent in the past two years. Seven million people a year now visit Blackpool's pleasure beach, making it one of the most visited attractions anywhere in Britain.

Tourist board staff acknowledge that their principal problem is still one of image. Jonathan Tucker, the board's development manager, said: "We have always identified that we have an image problem. People still

Variety of proposals should boost jobs

think it is all grim, satanic mills and cobbled streets when in fact much of the area is mainly rural."

Problems with image can also lead to a reluctance on the behalf of investors. The board recently held a seminar for the City to persuade financiers of the benefits of investing in the region.

New developments for the tourist include a £15 million scheme in Blackpool. The borough council, in conjunction with Sunley Leisure, is transforming open-air baths into a complete holiday-under-one-roof centre. It is to be known as the Sand Castle and is due for completion this month.

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MOTOR RACING: THE SEASON STARTS WITH THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST
Hope is the driving force for Mansell on the road to Rio



The white-hot hope of Britain: Mansell the front runner

At 2 pm local time on Sunday afternoon a green light will be flashed on over the starting line at the Jacarepanga circuit near Rio de Janeiro to signal the beginning of the 16-race contest for the 1986 world championship...
Johnny Dumfries is a driver of exceptional potential, but in his first season in Formula One he can only be expected to give Scania limited support on the track, so Scania must now prove he can get the job done on his own.

THE TEAMS
MARLBORO McLaren: Drivers: Alain Prost (Fr.), Ayrton Senna (Br.), Nelson Piquet (Br.).
DATA Generali Tyrrell: Drivers: Steve Nouri (Kuwait), Satoru Nakajima (Jpn.), Tiago Monteiro (Port.).
CANON Williams: Drivers: Nigel Mansell (GB), Ayrton Senna (Br.), Nelson Piquet (Br.).
OLIVETTI Brabham: Drivers: Ricardo Patino (Col), Ayrton Senna (Br.), Nelson Piquet (Br.).
JOHN PLAYER TEAM Lotus: Drivers: Jonathan Palmer (GB), Nelson Piquet (Br.), Nelson Piquet (Br.).

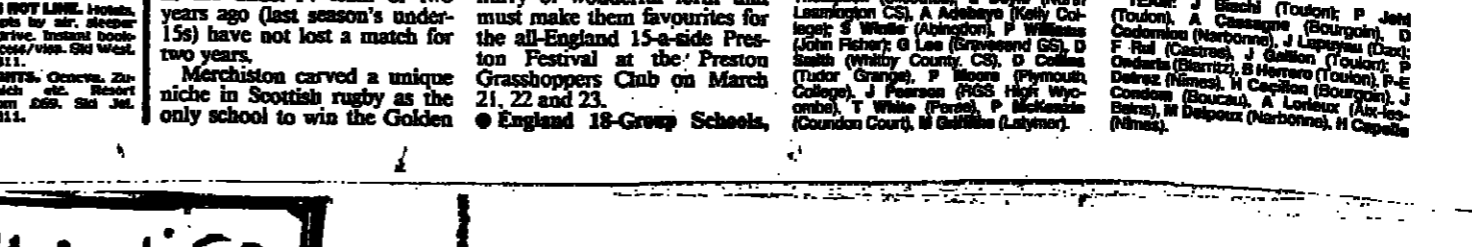
RACE DATES
Sunday: Brno, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
April 27: San Marino, Italy.
May 11: Monaco, Monte Carlo.
May 18: Belgium, Zolder-Francorchamps.
June 15: Canada, St. Catharines.
June 22: United States, Detroit.
July 6: France, Paul Ricard.
July 13: Britain, Brands Hatch.
July 27: Germany, Hockenheim.
August 3: Austria, Spielberg.
August 17: Austria, Spielberg.
September 7: Spain, Jerez.
October 12: Mexico, Mexico City.
October 26: Australia, Adelaide.

FLAIR ON THE FIELD AND OFF IT
From David Hands, Rugby Correspondent, Sydney
Andrew Stack's grand slam 1984 Australians gave Britain an idea of the slick, aggressive, attractive rugby currently being played in the southern hemisphere...
The New South Wales Union, though 112 years old, has lacked a home of its own and the development of the existing Concord ground - of which this is only the first phase of a £4.2 million (nearly £2½ million) - coincides with two years of re-elected activity at a time when Australian rugby has a high profile.

SCOTS NAME 26-strong tour party
Players who are on the fringe of selection by Scotland will be on trial during the Scots' short tour of Spain and France later this spring...
Several members of the Scottish XV who earned the five nations' championship with France are either injured or unavailable for selection. Gavin Hastings, the full back, who set a Scottish record of 52 points in the championship, has a nasty injury to his right hand which will prevent him from playing. Other notable absences are Johnnie Ross, the scrum half, and Robert Wall, the wing.

MERCHISTON APPROACH MASTER CLASS
Schools Rugby by Michael Stevenson
Merchiston Castle School's claim to be among the most successful in Scotland is suspect only if one focuses attention on their indifferent start to the season...
The school's main strength is in the backs and the back row, Martin, Logan Mair and Evan-Jobling-Purser, and the captain and skipper, Alan Thompson. The latter seems to be especially as the under-14 team of two years ago (last season's under-15) have not lost a match for two years.

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THE TEAMS
RACE DATES
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From David Hands, Rugby Correspondent, Sydney
SCOTS NAME 26-strong tour party
Merchiston approach master class
Schools Rugby by Michael Stevenson



Today's television and radio programmes

Edited by Peter Dear and Christopher Daville

BBC 1
6.00 Coffee AM
6.30 Breakfast Time with Nick Ross and Debbie Greenwood

TV-AM
6.15 Good Morning Britain
6.30 News
6.45 News

ITV LONDON
9.25 Thames news headlines
9.30 For Schools: the natural history of the sea-shore

BBC 2
6.55 Open University: Education - Can You Hear Me?
7.20 News

CHANNEL 4
9.30 Channel 4 Racing from Doncaster, introduced by Brough Scott

Radio 4
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

Radio 3
6.55am Weather, 7.00 News
7.05 Morning Concert: Handel (Concerto Grosso)

Radio 5
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

Radio 6
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

Radio 7
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

Radio 8
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

Radio 9
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

Radio 10
6.55 am Shipping 6.00 News; Weather 6.10 Farming
6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.30, 8.30 News

ENTERTAINMENTS
ART GALLERIES
CINEMAS
CONCERTS
EXHIBITIONS
OPERA & BALLET
THEATRES

England need 250-run start

From John Woodcock, Cricket Correspondent, Bridgetown. Downton, this meant that one from Edmonds, Emburey and Slack had to be left out. Eventually, because last-minute efforts are being made to make the pitch less hairy for fear of a quick finish, Slack was the one to go. It must be counted, too, that England were at their best in the field in the last Test when Edmonds and Emburey were bowling together. England are seldom so clearly outplayed as they were in Wednesday's one-day international. The disparity between the two sides is exaggerated by the inconsistent bounce of the modern Bridgetown pitch. Hence the fact that while West Indies could make a highly entertaining 249 for seven in 46 overs, England's batsmen came back complaining of the difficulty of timing the ball. The only way to stop shooters bowled at the pace of the one from Marshall which hit the base of Gower's stumps is to get on to the front foot, and that unfortunately is the likeliest way to be hit in the face by Gooch's quality, as well as of the problems of batting here against West Indies. Let alone how much he means to England, that the only hundred scored in those last five Tests against West Indies in Bridgetown was his in 1980-81, when he made 116 out of England's second innings total of 224. It seems to me that the one realistic chance England have of winning this match is by bowling first today and, by making full use of the conditions, getting West Indies on the run. Since the middle Seventies, when they started to hit the grass grow on the pitch to suit the West Indian fast bowlers, no side has won the toss here and batted first. Perhaps a fairer handicap than 250 runs might be for England to be given choice of innings. There is a natural tendency among the old England players currently in Barbados, most of them as couriers to touring groups, to think that England are letting their followers down, and that they themselves would have done better. The couriers include Trevor Bailey, Denis Compton, Mike Denness, Godfrey Evans, Tom Graveney, Colin Milburn and John Snow. Peter May is also here. But none of them when they came as players lead to contend with the sort of attack on the sort of pitch that obtains now. England go into today's game having been beaten by Windward Islands and Barbados, as well as by West Indies, four times (in the first two Tests and two of the three one-day internationals). By the time May's side had been in West Indies for a similar length of time they had chalked up a dozen first-class hundreds. That was in 1959-60. The top first-class score by the present team is Gattling's 80 against Jamaica on February 13. England are a badly shaken side. For most of the tour their practising has left much to be desired. Botham is a shadow of himself at his best and he sees, reads and hears the world turning against him. The hesitancy of their running between wickets reflects the team's state of mind. Gower's impulsive, rather inflexible style of leadership is suited to less demanding situations. Up the road Boycott practises hard against Franklin Stephenson, Hartley Alleyne and Ricardo Eltcock, three fast bowlers who have played for Barbados and spare him nothing. But in the corresponding Test match to this, five years ago, even he was out twice in 10 balls for nought and one. It is hard not to be apprehensive, therefore, about today, even while hoping for the best. ENGLAND: G A Gooch, R J Robinson, D J Gower, P Willey, A J Lamb, I T Botham, P H Downton, J E Emburey, P H Edmonds, J G Thomas, N A Foster. 12th man: W N Slack.



First blood to the bookmakers: Macs Reef (nearest camera), the outsider of four, races away from Tremblant and Bold Arrangement (checked cap) to win the feature event on the opening day of the Flat season at Doncaster. Racing, page 29 (Photograph: Ian Stewart)

Wales into last four as Griffiths excels

By Stuart Jones, Football Correspondent. After a seemingly interminable delay, the Football Association at last confirmed yesterday that England's fixture against the Soviet Union is to take place as planned in Tbilisi next Wednesday. The threat of cancellation was lifted when permission to travel directly to and from the southern state of Georgia was officially received from the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The confusion lasted until less than 72 hours before Bobby Robson's squad was scheduled to leave on Sunday. A Soviet telex which arrived at Lancaster Gate yesterday morning was written in English but might as well have been scribbled in hieroglyphics for all its clarity. The FA, who on Wednesday evening had repeated their request for a shortened flight path that excluded visits to Moscow, had yet again to seek further clarification. Its subsequent arrival not only saved Robson's World Cup preparations from a withering setback, but also spared the English authorities from deep embarrassment. Since qualifying for the finals, England have played in Egypt and Israel. With only the domestic skirmish against Scotland and the relatively gentle outings against Guatemala and Canada to come, the Soviets represented the lone genuinely meaningful opponents in the build-up to Mexico. If the match had been called off, as had seemed more than

Soviet green light spares the red faces in England

By Stuart Jones, Football Correspondent. After a seemingly interminable delay, the Football Association at last confirmed yesterday that England's fixture against the Soviet Union is to take place as planned in Tbilisi next Wednesday. The threat of cancellation was lifted when permission to travel directly to and from the southern state of Georgia was officially received from the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The confusion lasted until less than 72 hours before Bobby Robson's squad was scheduled to leave on Sunday. A Soviet telex which arrived at Lancaster Gate yesterday morning was written in English but might as well have been scribbled in hieroglyphics for all its clarity. The FA, who on Wednesday evening had repeated their request for a shortened flight path that excluded visits to Moscow, had yet again to seek further clarification. Its subsequent arrival not only saved Robson's World Cup preparations from a withering setback, but also spared the English authorities from deep embarrassment. Since qualifying for the finals, England have played in Egypt and Israel. With only the domestic skirmish against Scotland and the relatively gentle outings against Guatemala and Canada to come, the Soviets represented the lone genuinely meaningful opponents in the build-up to Mexico. If the match had been called off, as had seemed more than

Ballesteros lifted by support of players

From John Ballantine, New Orleans. Severiano Ballesteros's hopes of being reinstated to the US PGA tour have increased following a meeting here at which his fellow professionals supported the case for his ban to be lifted. Bernhard Langer and Nick Faldo were among scores of players who heard Ballesteros put his case prior to the first round of the New Orleans Classic, which was washed out by rain yesterday. The first round will now be today, with 36 holes played on Sunday. The upshot of the players' meeting may be either that the Spaniard will be reinstated to the tour or the rule requiring Europeans to compete in at least 15 tournaments will be changed. "Seve spoke on things he felt were important and said he felt that he was wronged," agreed Gary McCord, a member of the tournament policy board. "We got a lot of input from foreign players about the tour and about the guidelines they are required to perform under." Earlier, Ballesteros had explained: "I was never aware of the rules. The first thing I knew about it (a possible expulsion) was when Mr Berman wrote to me last August. I thought I'd lose my actual membership but be able to go back to the previous rule by which I played under sponsors' exemptions." Mr Berman and his board will now have to consider the feelings of their players and some compromise seems certain.

Thomas close to world title

From John Hennessy, Geneva. We shall see what Debbi Thomas, the United States figure-skating champion, is made of this evening. She has drawn the limelight and the pressure on herself by establishing a clear lead in the world championship here after the first two stages of the competition. The title is hers for the taking if she is big enough and strong enough. It will now require at least two people to beat her in the free skating for her to be denied the accolade that so many people seem anxious to bestow on her. Miss Thomas, trained by a Scot, Alex McGowan, in San Francisco, moreover chose a perilous route to the combination jump, usually the crucial element, in Wednesday night's short programme, placing the optional triple toe loop (in her case) after the compulsory double loop. But she brought it off splendidly. Susan Jackson, the lone British representative, may not be able to compete with the women's free skating. She is unwell and will see a doctor this morning. Natalya Bestemianova and Andrei Bukin suffered another setback yesterday. After their defeat in one of the compulsory dances of the day before, they were outskated in the original set pattern by their younger compatriots from Moscow, Marina Klimova and Sergei Ponomarev. The two British couples took up 14th and 15th position, but retained their previous places overall, Sharon Jones and Paul Askham, who had a fall

Belgium refuse to admit Scotland

By Stuart Jones, Football Correspondent. After a seemingly interminable delay, the Football Association at last confirmed yesterday that England's fixture against the Soviet Union is to take place as planned in Tbilisi next Wednesday. The threat of cancellation was lifted when permission to travel directly to and from the southern state of Georgia was officially received from the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The confusion lasted until less than 72 hours before Bobby Robson's squad was scheduled to leave on Sunday. A Soviet telex which arrived at Lancaster Gate yesterday morning was written in English but might as well have been scribbled in hieroglyphics for all its clarity. The FA, who on Wednesday evening had repeated their request for a shortened flight path that excluded visits to Moscow, had yet again to seek further clarification. Its subsequent arrival not only saved Robson's World Cup preparations from a withering setback, but also spared the English authorities from deep embarrassment. Since qualifying for the finals, England have played in Egypt and Israel. With only the domestic skirmish against Scotland and the relatively gentle outings against Guatemala and Canada to come, the Soviets represented the lone genuinely meaningful opponents in the build-up to Mexico. If the match had been called off, as had seemed more than

Why FA should be eyeing the man from Barcelona

From David Miller, Turin. For the first time since Jimmy Hogan and others some 50 years ago, an English coach is the most wanted man in European football, and on account of his achievements outside the environment of the British game. By taking Barcelona to the semi-finals of the European Cup at the expense of Juventus, the holders and world club champions, Terry Venables has earned universal acclaim. Speculation is rife that he will be leaving Barcelona; that he is to join, among others, Tottenham Hotspur; that a dozen positions are available. It would be surprising, however, if Venables did not discreetly hold his hand to await the outcome of England's fortunes in the World Cup. It is uncertain as yet whether the FA will extend Bobby Robson's contract. If England do not perform with distinction in Mexico, the FA may be inclined to ask Robson if he will continue as director of national coaching while they appoint a younger team manager. Venables is revealing the kind of tactical co-ordination which, vitally, wins matches away from home: recall the fate of Ramsey and Revie in Italy and too often of Greenwood away from Wembley. The measure of Barcelona's performance, winning the quarter-final 2-1 on aggregate, is that Juventus in the second leg played like genuine world champions. For 20 minutes at the start it seemed that they would swamp the opposition, that the single goal by which Barcelona led from the first leg

A record year for old firm

By Mitchell Platt. A marvellous third round of 68, which equalled the record for the event, propelled Belle Robertson and Mary McKenna to a deserved victory in the 21st Avia Watches women's foursomes championships at The Berkshire yesterday. Mrs Robertson, who won the British Open strokeplay title last year at the age of 49, and Mrs McKenna, who is seeking this year to gain a record ninth appearance in the Curtis Cup, came from three strokes behind overnight to lead by four strokes. So in the fourth and final round in the afternoon of the Red Course, Mrs Robertson and Miss McKenna could afford to play conservatively and a closing 79 gave them a record-equalling 72-hole aggregate of 298 - six over par - and a two-shot win over Linda Bayman and Maureen Garner. Mrs Robertson and Miss McKenna took command with eight birdies in the morning on the Blue Course - five of them in an outstanding outward-half of 31. LEADING SCORES: 298: C Robertson and M McKenna; 75, 75, 68, 79, 306: J E Bayman and J Garner; 78, 72, 77, 302: P Johnson and L Brown; 78, 75, 75, 306: S Moorcraft and T Harwood; 75, 79, 73, 311: J Hill and J Morley; 77, 78, 77, 312: P Smilie and J Collingwood; 80, 76, 77, 314: K Mitchell and N Wray; 81, 77, 77, 315: D Heron and C Hayes; 79, 81, 78, 316: C Caldwell and L Simpson; 77, 74, 75, 81, 315: H Dobson and A Johns; 74, 82, 79, 80. More golf, page 30.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Feeling the strain. Eamonn Martin's withdrawal with an adductor strain is a severe setback for England's chances of regaining the world cross country team title in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, on Sunday. Martin was one of five current and former English national champions in the team which will still mount their strongest challenge to the Ethiopians, who have won for the last five years. Martin said yesterday: "It's not a serious injury; it's just come at exactly the wrong time." There is a possibility that Martin will travel with the team and hope that the injury to his left leg will respond to rest and treatment. But he thought it unlikely yesterday, in which case Kevin Capper from Liverpool, the first reserve, will take his place. Liverpool run. Dawn Run, the Cheltenham Gold Cup winner, will have her next race at Liverpool on April 3 in preference to the Irish Grand National three days earlier. Her objective is the £12,000 Whitbread Gold Label Cup on the opening day of the Grand National meeting. Roberts talks. The Tottenham manager, Peter Shreeve, yesterday held peace talks with his England defender, Graham Roberts, and is confident that he can keep him happy at White Hart Lane. Roberts asked for a transfer this week because of financial worries. Goodwill show. Moscow (Reuters) - Some 3,000 athletes from nearly 50 nations have entered the Goodwill Games in Moscow from July 4-20. The games, sponsored by a US television network, will centre round clashes between the top Soviet and American athletes. As you were. The Isle of Man will stage this year's Rugby League Charity Shield game after all. The management committee made a surprising about-turn on their decision to switch the game on August 24 from Douglas to a venue in the north of England. The sponsoring brewery on the Isle of Man, Okells, have raised the prize money by £1,000 to £5,000, and guarantees regarding air flights and accommodation for the teams remain as last year. Prague boost. Alan Cooke, the England number three, has recovered from a hamstring injury and will play in the European table tennis championships in Prague from April 5 to 13. Desmond Douglas, who leads the England chase for titles, will decide after the championships whether to stay in Britain or accept one of the lucrative contract offers he has had from abroad. High hopes. Despite a shortfall of £150,000 in the amount needed to run this year's world four-in-hand driving championships, at Ascot from August 13-17, Prince Philip, the president of the championships, said yesterday that he and the committee are confident they will find the necessary sponsors to reach their target of £250,000. They intend to "the best ever".



Martin: setback New ground